



## **A study on the relationship between the Fundamental Values of Higher Education and Quality Assurance**

2021

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## Introduction

Using existing and new tools to safeguard the Fundamental Values of higher education: a technical, intellectual or policy endeavor?

*By Liviu Matei*

The present study looks at the use of quality assurance (QA) tools to safeguard the Fundamental Values of Higher Education in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), namely institutional autonomy, academic freedom and integrity, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education. This list of Fundamental Values was put forward in the EHEA Ministerial Communiqué adopted on November 19, 2020.<sup>1</sup> On the same occasion, the ministerial delegations of the 49 EHEA countries adopted a Statement on Academic Freedom, which can be seen as an attempt to establish a common conceptual reference for academic freedom in Europe, framed as a fundamental value, rather than a legal right, regulatory principle or governance norm.

The study, which is based on extensive empirical research using qualitative and quantitative methods, can be considered a technical exercise and document. And it is indeed “technical”, given that it provides extensive, detailed, and precise factual information about whether or not, and then how, quality assurance regulations and practices in the EHEA pay attention to the Fundamental Values and promote them explicitly or even only implicitly.

The study, however, is also meant to inform a broader intellectual and policy debate about how to develop and employ monitoring mechanisms and tools for the implementation of the Fundamental Values of higher education within the EHEA, and, as part of this, address the current crisis of academic freedom, and chart a course for academic freedom out of this crisis.

The reflection about the sources of the crisis of academic freedom, its nature and possible solutions, is recent and ongoing, as are practical efforts to address it at the European level. A Fundamental Values approach has emerged, largely after 2015, as a particular and potentially productive way to address the crisis. It can be characterized as an attempt to reconceptualize and codify academic freedom as a fundamental value, propose a list of other Fundamental Values and define or codify all of them, and then put in practice European-wide mechanisms to monitor their implementation. This is a timely development, considering that a systematic reflection on academic freedom, both as an intellectual and policy exercise, was altogether absent for too long in Europe.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome\\_Ministerial\\_Communique.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome_Ministerial_Communique.pdf) (Accessed Feb. 2, 2021)

The present study, commissioned by the Council of Europe and prepared by the OSUN Global Observatory on Academic Freedom, is intended as a particular contribution to the same efforts. It asks a simple but difficult question: Can existing quality assurance tools that already function well in the EHEA be used to safeguard Fundamental Values altogether? The study does not ask, let alone answer, broader questions about other possible means and tools that could or should be used; yet it might contribute to this broader discussion.

When studying the use of QA tools, we need to acknowledge that they can only matter as tools to safeguard the Fundamental Values in systems where quality of higher education itself matters. Moreover, QA tools may work and help promote Fundamental Values primarily if not exclusively in democratic regimes, where there is significant respect for knowledge, research, and education among the ruling political elites, as well as sufficient respect for the rule of law. In places where there is no consideration for knowledge as a public good and for the rule of law, where quality of higher education is not important, QA tools will not serve to safeguard academic freedom or the other Fundamental Values. In such places, a different understanding of these Fundamental Values might need to be put to use, for example one that sees academic freedom as a human right. This observation, in turn, speaks for the need to clarify different types of understandings of Fundamental Values, check if there are effective codifications for them or they need to be revised, and, finally, to employ appropriate tools to safeguard institutional autonomy, academic freedom and integrity, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education.

## Methodology

The central question addressed in this study is: What role do the Fundamental Values of higher education play in the regulatory frameworks for, and practice of, quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)?

The Fundamental Values of higher education are understood as being those outlined in the 2020 Rome Communiqué of the EHEA:

- ✓ institutional autonomy,
- ✓ academic freedom and integrity,
- ✓ participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and
- ✓ public responsibility for and of higher education.

In order to answer this question, the study explores quality assurance (QA) work conducted by quality assurance agencies from States Parties to the European Cultural Convention that have successfully demonstrated compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) through inclusion in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). Currently, there are 50 such agencies.<sup>2</sup> More precisely, we investigate two key aspects:

- The external formal regulatory frameworks for these agencies at the national level and their own regulations of QA work;
- The practice of the implementation of these frameworks and their *de facto* consequences for quality assurance.

The interconnectedness between higher education and democracy is not a recent discovery. In the last few years, however, it has been gaining importance with the realization that we are facing a crisis of academic freedom throughout the EHEA. A European policy approach making reference to the Fundamental Values of Higher Education has emerged as a potentially productive effort in addressing this crisis.

Academic freedom has been largely taken for granted in Europe in the first decade and a half of the third millennium, until major, unexpected cases of infringement, in all parts of the continent, and the inability to address them have made clear the need to think, and perhaps re-think how to

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.eqar.eu/register/agencies/> (Accessed May 17, 2021)

understand and codify it in the EHEA, and how to build supportive and efficient new regulatory frameworks.

A European-wide framework to quality assurance had been developed successfully before this crisis. Identifying the existing and potential new linkages between the QA processes and Fundamental Values can help us better understand the current situation with regard to academic freedom, as well as a variety of possible new policy approaches to, and conceptualizations of, academic freedom and challenges to the enumerated values themselves.

The methodological approach here focuses on country case studies, while providing a meta-analysis at the overall level of EHEA. The country case study approach allows for a precise understanding of the concrete consequences of QA procedures in the cases of (non)respect of Fundamental Values, and interconnectedness between the overall national policies towards HE and QA procedures.

Looking into the 49 EHEA member states,<sup>3</sup> the country fact sheets comprehend both a *de jure* and *de facto* review.

Regarding the *de jure* analysis, we did not focus on the general regulatory provisions regarding Fundamental Values in higher education systems at the national level (constitutional or legislative). Instead, the thrust of our *de jure* analysis was twofold:

- National regulatory frameworks specifically regarding Quality Assurance;
- Regulatory frameworks of the QA agencies themselves.

The regulatory frameworks of the 50 EQAR-listed agencies which have been the object of our analysis included national legislation in direct reference to the QA procedures and agencies, and agencies' internal procedural documents – both in direct relation to protection and promotion of the four EHEA Fundamental Values. Through an extensive analysis of the relevant provisions, we scrutinized whether the EHEA formulated Fundamental Values are included in these frameworks, at which levels, and whether they are accompanied by more elaborated definitions or measures. For example, are there concrete provisions sanctioning the lack of respect of academic freedom by the institutions that are being evaluated? How is the participation of students and staff reflected in the evaluation procedures? Is accreditation affected by the lack of respect of Fundamental Values, more generally? It is important to note that, since all agencies herewith researched are EQAR registered, and adhere to the European Standards and Guidelines, all of the provisions directly referring to the ESG have been omitted as being self-understood. Our focus

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ehea.info/page-members> (Accessed May 17, 2021)

was to look beyond the mere ESG, for any additional provisions, declarations or regulations referring to Fundamental Values of the EHEA.

A significant challenge for our study was the usual language difficulty in accessing the regulatory frameworks. EHEA member states do not provide easy and open access in English language to all their external regulatory frameworks, and similar challenges occurred regarding the agencies' own regulations. The linguistic obstacles were circumvented in most of the cases through the *de facto* analysis tools, aiding us in completing our data collection; yet the data have certainly been impoverished and we would welcome any suggestions and criticism which would further complement the existing analysis. The idea of this study is to remain a living piece of research, providing a framework for information and analysis that could be continuously updated.

We collected data through a survey shared with the agencies, focusing on the practical experiences of external evaluations. Our survey was sent to all 50 EQAR registered agencies, and despite prolonged deadlines and invitations by EQAR and the researchers involved in this study, only 17 responses arrived, which constitutes only third of these agencies. The low number of responses is an information on its own, depicting reluctance or lack of interest among QA agencies to get actively engaged in the reflection on the relationship between QA and Fundamental Values. This part of the study expands *de jure* findings with *de facto* findings of the research, providing linkages with specific cases, outlining the convergences and divergences between the two, and provides an added value in investigating the level of awareness of the (need for) protection of Fundamental Values in the EHEA.

Based on the data acquired and analysed within the country fact sheets, we conducted a meta-analysis looking at the whole of the European Higher Education Area. Our study further provides reflections on possible policy solutions to making Fundamental Values in QA a reality.



# The role of Fundamental Values in Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area: a comprehensive national level meta-synthesis

By Daniela Craciun

The current report focuses on the role of Fundamental Values in the regulatory frameworks and the practice of quality assurance agencies in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). This chapter provides a meta-synthesis of the findings at the national level. **Section 1** looks at what are Fundamental Values in higher education in the EHEA and what is the link between Fundamental Values and quality in higher education. **Section 2** provides a summary of the findings from the *de jure* analysis of EHEA member states regulatory framework. **Section 3** provides a summary of the *de facto* analysis of the practices of quality assurance agencies.

## 1. Fundamental Values and Quality Assurance in the EHEA

**This section answers the questions:**

- (1) What are Fundamental Values in higher education in the EHEA?
- (2) What is the link between Fundamental Values and quality in higher education?

In 1999, 29 European countries signed the Bologna Declaration committing to build the EHEA. This formally started what is commonly referred to as the Bologna Process, “one of the most remarkable and complex policy and political developments in Europe”.<sup>4</sup> Today, the EHEA members include 49 countries and the European Commission “spanning half the globe, from Reykjavik to Vladivostok”<sup>5</sup> and “from Valetta to Spitzbergen”<sup>6</sup> (see **Figure 1**). To become a member of the EHEA, countries must be signatories to the European Cultural Convention and “declare their willingness to pursue and implement the objectives of the Bologna Process in their own systems of higher education”.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Matei, L., Crăciun, D., & Torotcoi, S. (2018) A Resounding Success or Downright Failure? Understanding Policy Transfer within the Bologna Process in Central and Eastern Europe. In A. Batory, A. Cartwright, & D. Stone (eds.), *Policy Experiments, Failures and Innovations* (pp. 170–188). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

<sup>5</sup> Scott, P. (2012) The Bologna Process Has Been Key to European Universities’ Success. *The Guardian*, available at <http://www.theguardian.com/education/2012/apr/30/bologna-process-key-european-university-success> (Accessed Dec. 3, 2021)

<sup>6</sup> Bergan, S. (2010) Bologna 1999–2010: Achievements, Challenges and Perspectives, available at [http://www.ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/2010\\_Budapest\\_Vienna/65/6/duz\\_spec\\_Bologna\\_598656.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/2010_Budapest_Vienna/65/6/duz_spec_Bologna_598656.pdf) (Accessed Dec. 3, 2021)

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.ehea.info/page-full\\_members](http://www.ehea.info/page-full_members) (Accessed Dec. 3, 2021)

Over the years, the voluntary intergovernmental Bologna Process has developed a set of common instruments to synchronize the continent's disparate higher education systems and make the EHEA a reality.<sup>8</sup> These instruments comprise both “hardware” and “software” elements.<sup>9</sup> The hardware elements include pre-set degree cycles, the Diploma Supplement, the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), and the Qualifications Framework. The software elements include standards and guidelines for quality assurance, principles and guidelines to strengthen the social dimension of higher education, and shared Fundamental Values to guide higher education. The focus of this research project is on a particular set of “software” elements: Fundamental Values in the EHEA and the role they play in quality assurance.

**Figure 1:** The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) Member States<sup>10</sup>



So, what are these shared core values of higher education and why are they important? Fundamental Values in higher education have underpinned the Bologna Process since the outset. See for instance the Bologna Declaration reference to Magna Charta Universitatum, the Prague Communiqué reference to students as members of the academic community and higher education as a public good and public responsibility, or the 2004 Bologna Follow-Up Group document on the assessment of membership applications which refers to academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and student and staff participation in higher education governance. But recently,

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<sup>8</sup> In addition, to achieve its aims, the Bologna Process also makes use of policy instruments developed in other forums such as the Lisbon Recognition Convention which was jointly drafted by the Council of Europe and UNESCO.

<sup>9</sup> “Hardware” elements refer to technical policy instruments, while “software elements” refer to norms and guidelines to ensure the harmonization of higher education systems within the EHEA.

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.ehea.info/page-full\\_members](http://www.ehea.info/page-full_members) (Accessed Dec. 3, 2021)

Fundamental Values have been made explicit. “Having seen these Fundamental Values challenged in recent years in some of our countries”<sup>11</sup> and “following pressure and discreet (read “anonymous”) advocacy by influential and shrewd stakeholders”,<sup>12</sup> the Fundamental Values of the EHEA were spelled out in the Paris 2018 Communiqué. The four Fundamental Values of higher education identified are:

- (1) institutional autonomy,
- (2) academic freedom and integrity,
- (3) participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and
- (4) public responsibility for and of higher education.

The Rome 2020 Communiqué, adopted by the latest ministerial conference, reaffirms the commitment of EHEA members to “promoting and protecting **our shared fundamental values in the entire EHEA through intensified political dialogue and cooperation** as the necessary basis for quality learning, teaching and research as well as for democratic societies”<sup>13</sup> (emphasis in original). The Communiqué commits EHEA member states to upholding these values in their higher education systems and draws a clear link between Fundamental Values and quality education and Fundamental Values and democracy.

However, except for academic freedom on which there is also a separate annex,<sup>14</sup> the Rome Communiqué does not elaborate on the definitions of these Fundamental Values or propose measures to support upholding these values or sanction their infringements.<sup>15</sup> Instead, it asks the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG), which is the executive support structure of the Bologna Process, to “develop a **framework** for the enhancement of the fundamental values of the EHEA that will foster self-reflection, constructive dialogue and peer-learning across national authorities, higher education institutions and organizations, while also making it possible to assess the degree to which these are honoured and implemented in our systems”<sup>16</sup> (emphasis in original). Thus, measures to assess and uphold Fundamental Values in the EHEA will be

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<sup>11</sup>

[http://www.ehea.info/Upload/document/ministerial\\_declarations/EHEAParis2018\\_Communique\\_final\\_952771.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Upload/document/ministerial_declarations/EHEAParis2018_Communique_final_952771.pdf) (Accessed Dec. 3, 2021)

<sup>12</sup> Matei, L. (2020) Charting Academic Freedom in Europe. In A. Curaj, L. Deca, & R. Pricopie (eds.) European Higher Education Area: Challenges for a New Decade. Springer, Cham.

[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-56316-5\\_28](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-56316-5_28) (Accessed Dec. 3, 2021)

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome\\_Ministerial\\_Communique.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome_Ministerial_Communique.pdf) (Accessed Dec. 3, 2021)

<sup>14</sup> [https://ehea2020rome.it/storage/uploads/5d29d1cd-4616-4dfe-a2af-29140a02ec09/BFUG\\_Annex-I-Communique\\_Statement\\_Academic\\_freedom.pdf](https://ehea2020rome.it/storage/uploads/5d29d1cd-4616-4dfe-a2af-29140a02ec09/BFUG_Annex-I-Communique_Statement_Academic_freedom.pdf) (Accessed Dec. 10, 2021)

<sup>15</sup> The reason for this is the short two-year time frame that the task force on fundamental values had to develop definitions and indicators for all values.

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome\\_Ministerial\\_Communique.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome_Ministerial_Communique.pdf) (Accessed Dec. 3, 2021)

developed at a later point.<sup>17</sup> Specifically, definitions of all Fundamental Values and a mechanism for monitoring them are supposed to be adopted at the next EHEA ministerial meeting in Tirana in 2024.<sup>18</sup>

As previously mentioned, the fundamental value of academic freedom takes center stage in the Rome 2020 Ministerial Communiqué. The emphasis on academic freedom – a core value and a governing principle of higher education intuitions – may come from the realization that it is under threat not just in autocratic states, but in democracies as well.<sup>19</sup> In 2020, at the Bologna Process Researchers Conference, Matei argued that “although there are challenges to academic freedom in all other parts of the world and also within individual national higher education systems”, we are experiencing a crisis of academic freedom that is specific to the EHEA.<sup>20</sup> As such, he urged that, a European crisis requires a European solution. According to Matei (2020), the crisis has a conceptual dimension (intellectual crisis) and an empirical dimension (political, regulatory, institutional crisis).<sup>21</sup>

First, the conceptual dimension. “The essence of academic freedom is not in dispute, even when violated”,<sup>22</sup> but the “battle to define what academic freedom means is not over”<sup>23</sup> as apart from some “general points, not much agreement exists on the concept of academic freedom (what it means, what its scope is)”.<sup>24</sup> Matei (2020) attributed the intellectual crisis to the absence of a common conceptual reference for academic freedom in the EHEA as a whole. In other words, the problem is not that we do not have definitions of academic freedom in individual EHEA member states, but that we do not have a definition on which all member states can agree and to which they can refer.

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<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, the Communiqué mentions the possibility for EHEA members and other parties to cooperate on fostering academic integrity using the Council of Europe’s Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED).

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/higher-education-and-research/-/first-meeting-of-the-ehea-working-group-on-fundamental-values> (Accessed Dec. 20, 2021)

<sup>19</sup> Crăciun, D., & Mihut, G. (2017) Requiem for a Dream: Academic Freedom Under Threat in Democracies. *International Higher Education* (90), 15–16.

<sup>20</sup> Matei (2020)

<sup>21</sup> Matei (2020)

<sup>22</sup> Quinn, R. (2021) “What Is Academic Freedom?”, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, available at: <https://www.humboldt-foundation.de/en/explore/newsroom/dossier-philipp-schwartz-initiative/what-is-academic-freedom> (Accessed Dec. 20, 2021)

<sup>23</sup> Greenfield, N.M. (2021) “Battle to define what academic freedom means is not over”, *University World News*, available at: <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20211019134007747> (Accessed Nov. 1, 2021)

<sup>24</sup> Kronfeldner, M. (2021) The Freedom we Mean: A Causal Independence Account of Creativity and Academic Freedom. *European Journal for Philosophy of Science* 11 (58). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13194-021-00373-6>

At the Bologna Process ministerial meeting in Rome a common definition was adopted. Academic freedom in the EHEA is now defined as “freedom of academic staff and students to engage in research, teaching, learning and communication in and with society without interference nor fear of reprisal”.<sup>25</sup> This is a standard philosophical conception of academic freedom that “entails *negative* freedom from infringement, with respect to all kinds of authorities (academic, religious, political, economic, etc.)”<sup>26</sup> (emphasis in original). The EHEA definition of academic freedom has a broad scope regarding the liberties it guarantees. But, as the Rome Communiqué makes clear, academic freedom is not an absolute value, it is framed by rigorous scientific and professional standards, such as academic integrity, and it is related to other Fundamental Values in higher education, like institutional autonomy and public responsibility for and of higher education.

Second, is the empirical dimension. As conceptualization precedes operationalization, the difficulty in reaching agreement over the scope, levels and dimensions of academic freedom is “mirrored in issues and disagreements about how to measure it”<sup>27</sup> and how to implement it. Matei (2020) foresaw this in arguing that even if a common conceptual reference point in the EHEA was adopted “it is not certain how or if [it] will ever be put in practice”. The EHEA definition of academic freedom is new, but not novel. It is in line with a long historical European tradition that follows the Humboldtian understanding of academic freedom as freedom *from* interference, an aspect that is already “part of most legislations”<sup>28</sup> at national level. But even though academic freedom is encoded in constitutional, legislative, and regulatory frameworks, it has been observed that it is under threat in many of the EHEA member states.<sup>29</sup> A quick search on University World News, reveals recent attacks on or concerns with academic freedom in Hungary,<sup>30</sup> Norway,<sup>31</sup> Turkey,<sup>32</sup> the Netherlands<sup>33</sup> and Germany<sup>34</sup> – to name just a few. Thus, concerns that the empirical dimension of EHEA’s academic freedom crisis is not subsiding, despite the progress made conceptually, are warranted.

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<sup>25</sup> [http://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome\\_Ministerial\\_Communique.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome_Ministerial_Communique.pdf) (Accessed Dec. 3, 2021)

<sup>26</sup> Kronfelder (2021)

<sup>27</sup> Kronfelder (2021)

<sup>28</sup> Kronfelder (2021)

<sup>29</sup> See Craciun & Mihut (2017); Matei (2020, 2021)

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20210621095938175> (Accessed Nov. 1, 2021)

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20211020102851997> (Accessed Nov. 1, 2021)

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20210925064430564> (Accessed Nov. 1, 2021)

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20211016141743751> (Accessed Nov. 1, 2021)

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20211007154235420> (Accessed Nov. 1, 2021)

The 2024 EHEA ministerial meeting in Tirana will hopefully give more clarity to the definitions or understanding of all Fundamental Values of higher education in the EHEA and, importantly, adopt criteria for assessing and monitoring their implementation in the member states. Until then, the question becomes: Do we already have other mechanisms in place that (aim to) safeguard Fundamental Values in higher education? One proposed way for checking and safeguarding compliance with Fundamental Values in the EHEA has been the use of existing quality assurance systems. Before answering the question of whether quality assurance systems support the compliance with and implementation of Fundamental Values,<sup>35</sup> it is important to ask what is the link between Fundamental Values and quality in higher education? Is there a link?

Again, the fundamental value of academic freedom provides a fertile investigation ground. There are various philosophical justifications for academic freedom with proponents arguing that we should defend it in order to protect truth, democracy, autonomy and independent thinking.<sup>36</sup> The progressivist defense of academic freedom for truth is the one that is most commonly linked to quality in higher education. In other words, if we do not have academic freedom, we cannot progress in matters of truth so the quality of our teaching, learning, and research suffers.

Reality is a bit more complex and blurs the lines between these theoretical arguments. For instance, the 2020 Rome Communiqué justifies academic freedom as necessary for **truth, democracy, and independent thinking**. Overall, it argues that academic freedom is central to quality in higher education: “an indispensable aspect”.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, if academic freedom is threatened, so too is quality higher education itself. The same applies to other Fundamental Values, e.g. institutional autonomy and academic integrity. For instance, the Declaration adopted by the 2019 Global Forum on Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and the Future of Democracy<sup>38</sup> states that: “Academic freedom and institutional autonomy are essential to furthering the quality of learning, teaching, and research, including artistic creative practice – quality understood as observing and developing the standards of academic disciplines and also quality as the contribution of higher education to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law”.<sup>39</sup> The Global Forum Declaration makes the point that Fundamental Values in higher education need to be safeguarded and while they are related and “often considered together, one does not necessarily

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<sup>35</sup> Sections 2 & 3 of this chapter provide a tentative answer to this question based on the *de jure* and *de facto* analysis conducted for this research project.

<sup>36</sup> Kronfelder (2021)

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome\\_Ministerial\\_Communique.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome_Ministerial_Communique.pdf) (Accessed Dec. 3, 2021)

<sup>38</sup> The Forum was co-organized by the Council of Europe, the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy, the Organization of American States, the Magna Charta Observatory, and the International Association of Universities.

<sup>39</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/global-forum-declaration-global-forum-final-21-06-19-003-/16809523e5> (Accessed Jan. 12, 2021)

guarantee the other”.<sup>40</sup> The 2020 Rome Communiqué also argues that while academic freedom “is intrinsic to quality in higher education, it is not a value that can be automatically assumed”, it has to be “protected and promoted”.<sup>41</sup> If academic freedom is so central to quality in higher education, it begs the question: Do quality assurance systems safeguard academic freedom, and how?

We know that academic freedom has been affected by quality assurance systems and procedures. For instance, academics can perceive “quality assurance ... as a form of control and an encroachment on their professional autonomy” especially if it focuses on “extensive need for documentation and ‘box-ticking’ at the expense of more directly enhancing quality activities such as teaching preparation”.<sup>42</sup> But if quality assurance brings about benefits to higher education stakeholders, it is a trade-off that has been generally accepted because of another important value in higher education: the public responsibility of and for higher education. A similar line of argumentation can be applied to describe the interplay between quality assurance and the fundamental value of institutional autonomy. The question then becomes, do quality assurance systems give something back, do they actually support or safeguard Fundamental Values in higher education? The next sections take on this central question.

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<sup>40</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/global-forum-declaration-global-forum-final-21-06-19-003-/16809523e5> (Accessed Jan. 12, 2021)

<sup>41</sup> [http://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome\\_Ministerial\\_Communique.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome_Ministerial_Communique.pdf) (Accessed Dec. 3, 2021)

<sup>42</sup> Hoecht, A. (2006) Quality Assurance in UK Higher Education: Issues of Trust, Control, Professional Autonomy and Accountability. Higher Education, 51. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/29734995>

## 2. Meta-synthesis of findings: *de jure* analysis

**This section looks at the national and agency level regulatory frameworks and answers the questions:**

- (1) Are Fundamental Values included in relevant quality assurance regulatory provisions?
- (2) Are Fundamental Values defined in relevant quality assurance regulatory provisions? If yes, how are they defined?
- (3) Are there concrete quality assurance measures to support respect for Fundamental Values? Are there concrete quality assurance provisions to sanction the lack of respect for Fundamental Values?

*De jure* analysis is based on the analysis of the country fact sheets in this report.

### 2.1 National regulatory frameworks

**Question 1: Are Fundamental Values included in national level regulatory provisions for quality assurance?**

**Short answer after analysis of country fact sheets:** Yes, in some cases (n=16). **Figure 2** maps the EHEA member states according to whether direct references to any fundamental value were identified in national regulatory frameworks on quality assurance. **Table 1** provides a list of EHEA member states where direct references to specific Fundamental Values were identified in national regulatory frameworks on quality assurance. **Figure 3** maps EHEA member states according to whether direct references to specific Fundamental Values were identified in national regulatory frameworks on quality assurance.

**Question 2: Are Fundamental Values defined in relevant quality assurance regulatory provisions? If yes, how are they defined?**

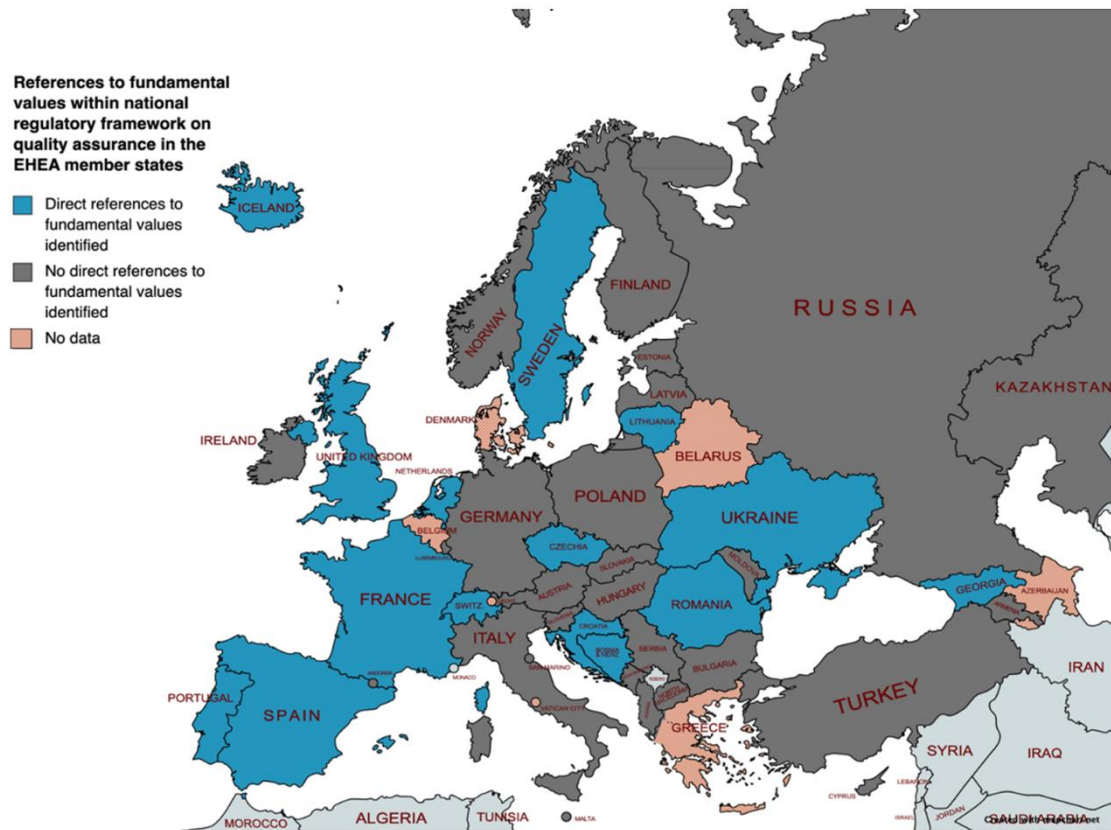
**Short answer after analysis of country fact sheets:** None identified.

**Question 3: Are there concrete quality assurance measures to support respect for Fundamental Values? Are there concrete quality assurance provisions to sanction the lack of respect for Fundamental Values?**

**Short answer after analysis of country fact sheets:** None identified.



**Figure 2:** Direct references to Fundamental Values identified in national regulatory frameworks on quality assurance in the EHEA member states

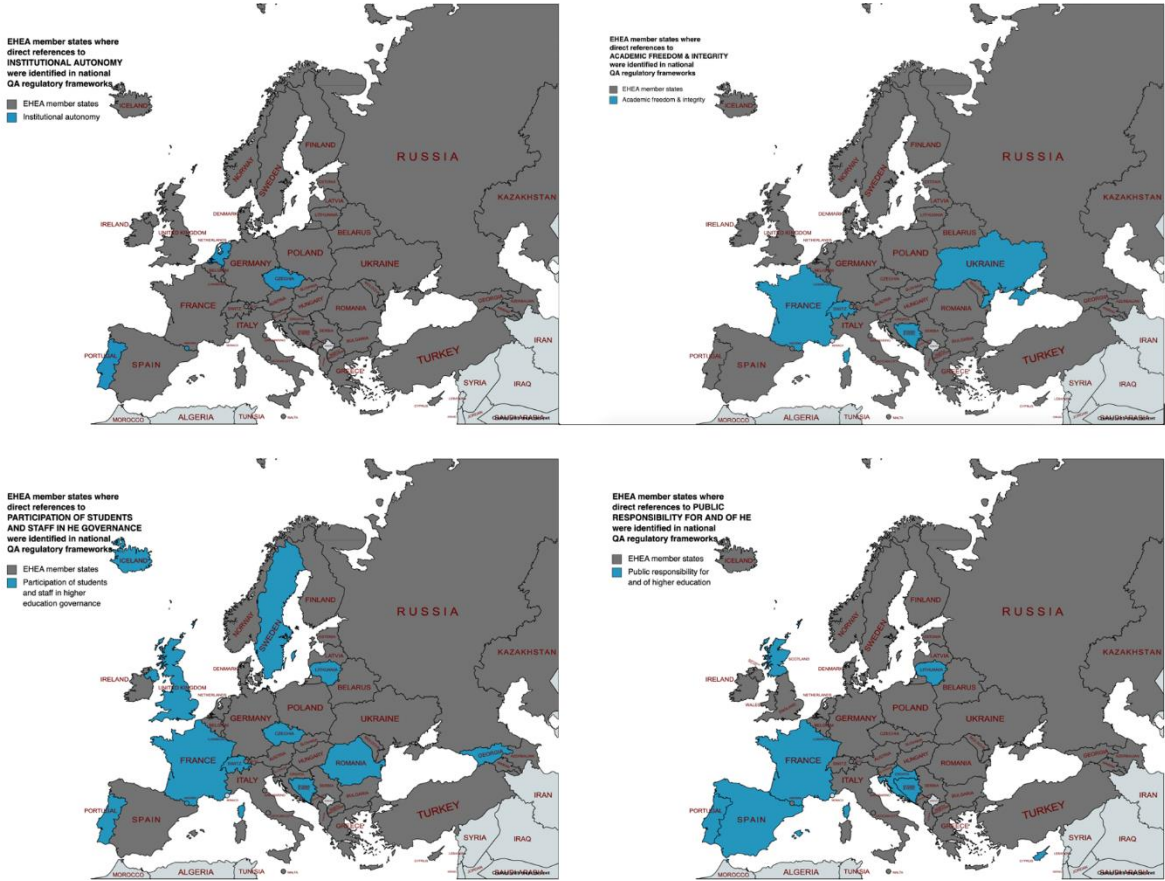


**Table 1:** EHEA member states where direct references to specific Fundamental Values were identified in national regulatory frameworks on quality assurance

Fundamental Values	EHEA member states where direct references to fundamental value were identified in national regulatory frameworks on quality assurance
<b>Institutional autonomy</b>	Andorra, Czechia, Netherlands, Portugal
<b>Academic freedom and integrity</b>	Bosnia and Herzegovina, France, Switzerland, Ukraine
<b>Participation of students and staff in higher education governance</b>	Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, France, Georgia, Iceland, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom

<b>Public responsibility for and of higher education</b>	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Lithuania, Portugal, Spain
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**Figure 3:** Direct references to specific Fundamental Values identified in national regulatory frameworks on quality assurance in the EHEA member states



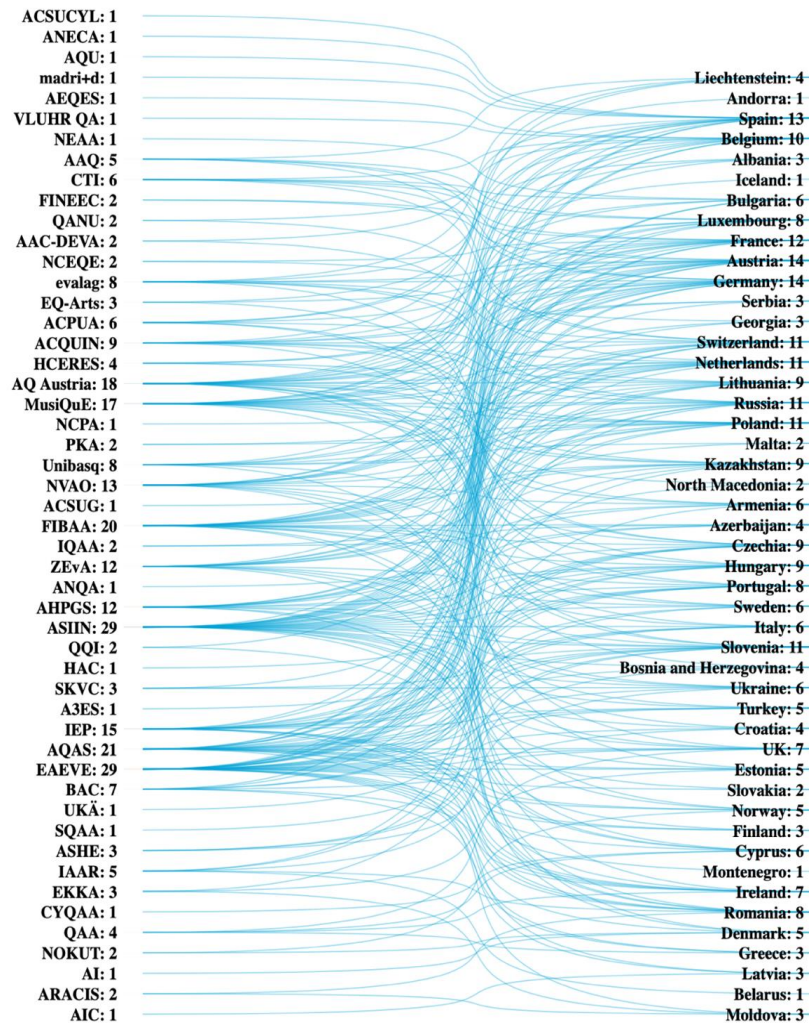
**2.2 Operating agencies’ regulatory frameworks**

In some cases, EQAR registered Quality Assurance Agencies (QAAs) operate, not just in the country of origin, but in other EHEA member states as well. Thus, the agencies’ regulatory frameworks can have an influence on quality assurance in the other member states in which they operate. **Figure 4** represents the intricate architecture of QAAs and the countries in which they operate. On the left side of the figure are the abbreviations of the EQAR registered agencies and the number of countries in which they operate; on the right side are the EHEA member states and the number of QAA agencies that operate in the country.

Figure 4: Sanki Diagram of EQAR QAAs and countries in which they operate

Name of QAA: No. of countries in which they operate

Name of country: No. of QAAs operating in country



**Question 1: Are Fundamental Values included in agency level regulatory provisions for quality assurance?**

**Short answer after analysis of country fact sheets:** Yes, in many (n QAAs= 27; n member states = 38).

**Table 2:** EQAR QAAs where direct references to specific Fundamental Values were identified in agency level regulatory frameworks

<b>Fundamental Values</b>	<b>QAAs where direct references to Fundamental Values were identified in agency regulatory frameworks on quality assurance</b>	<b>Number of QAAs</b>	<b>Number of EHEA countries in which they operate</b>
<b>Institutional autonomy</b>	AAQ, AEQES, ARACIS, CTI, evalag, FINEEC, HCERES, NVAO, ZEvA	n=9	n=25
<b>Academic freedom and integrity</b>	ACQUIN, AEQES, AHPGS, ARACIS, ASHE, EKKA, evalag, FINEEC, HAC, HCERES, IQAA, NEAA, NOKUT, QQI, ZEvA	n=15	n=29
<b>Participation of students and staff in higher education governance</b>	ACQUIN, AEQES, AIC, ANQA, ASHE, CTI, evalag, HCERES, IQAA, QQI, UKA	n=11	n=23
<b>Public responsibility for and of higher education</b>	A3ES, AAQ, ACQUIN, ACSUCYL, AEQES, ANQA, AQU, ARACIS, CTI, FINEEC, HCERES, IQAA, NEAA, NOKUT, NVAO, PKA, QQI, SKVC, UKA, ZEvA	n=20	n=28

**Note:** It was considered that an agency made reference to the Fundamental Value even if it did so partially (i.e., if it made reference to academic freedom, but not academic integrity it was still counted as making reference to the Fundamental Value.)

**Question 2: Are Fundamental Values defined in relevant quality assurance regulatory provisions? If yes, how are they defined?**

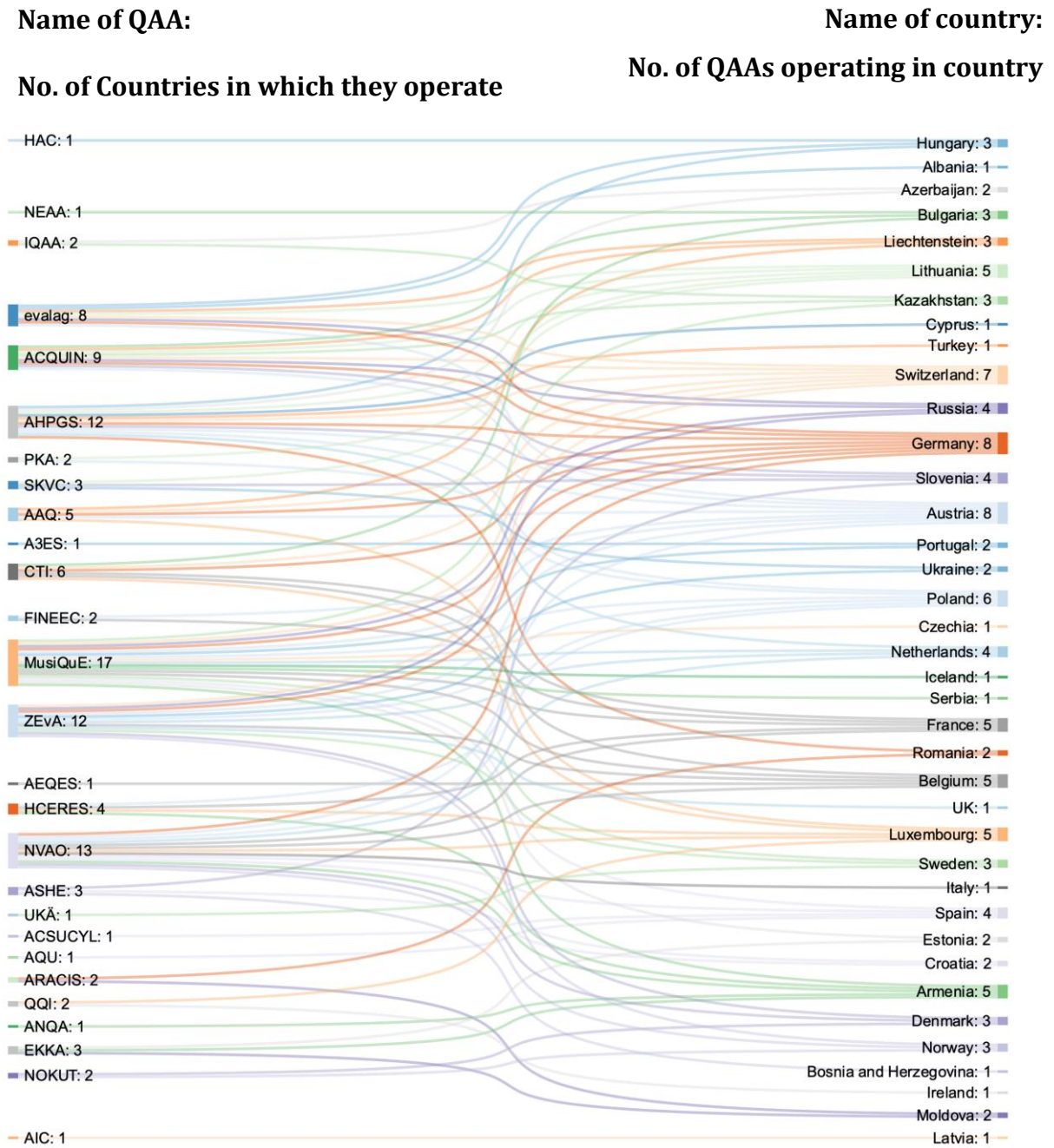
**Short answer after analysis of country fact sheets:** None identified

**Question 3: Are there concrete quality assurance measures to support respect for Fundamental Values? Are there concrete quality assurance provisions to sanction the lack of respect for Fundamental Values?**

**Short answer after analysis of country fact sheets:** None identified

**Figure 5** shows the QAAs where direct references to any Fundamental Value were identified in agency level regulatory provisions on quality assurance. On the left side of the figure are the abbreviations of the EQAR registered agencies that make references to Fundamental Values and the number of countries in which they operate. On the right side of the figure are the EHEA member states in which those QAAs operate and the number of QAAs operating in the country where direct reference to Fundamental Values was identified in agency level regulatory provisions.

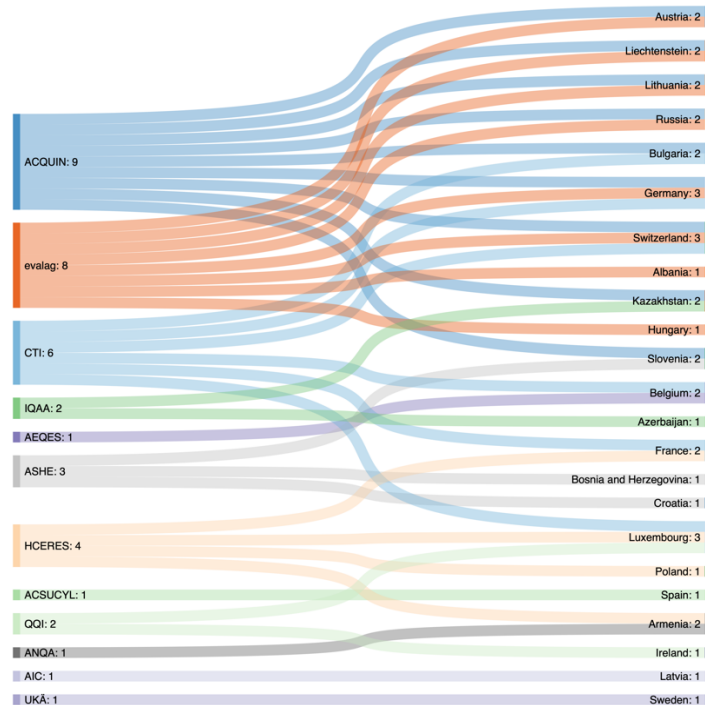
**Figure 5: Sanki Diagram of EQAR QAAs and countries in which they operate**



Figures 6 to 9 show the QAAs where direct references to specific Fundamental Values were identified in agency level regulatory provisions on quality assurance, coupled with the countries in which these agencies operate.

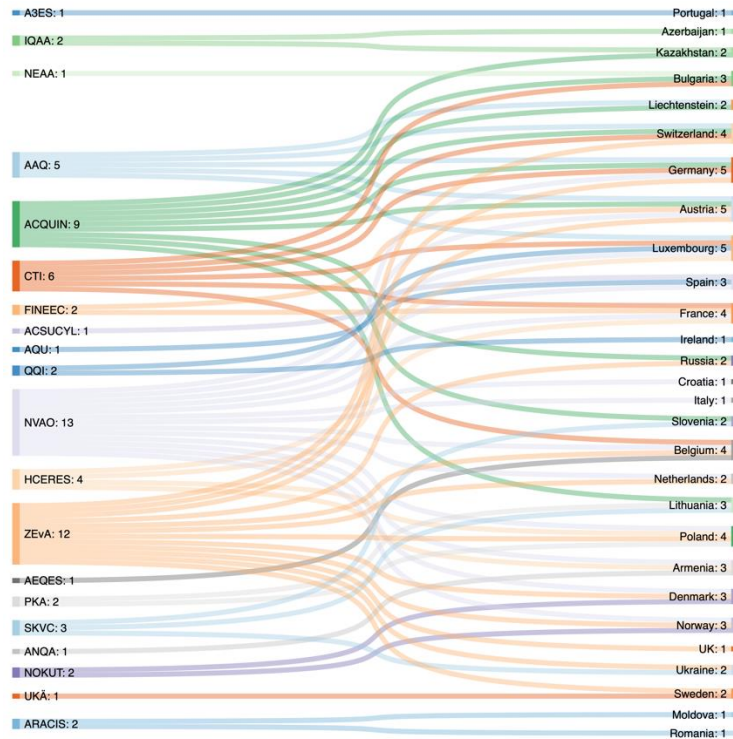


**Figure 8:** EQAR QAAs where direct references to **participation of students and staff in higher education governance** were identified in agency level regulatory frameworks, and EHEA member states in which they operate



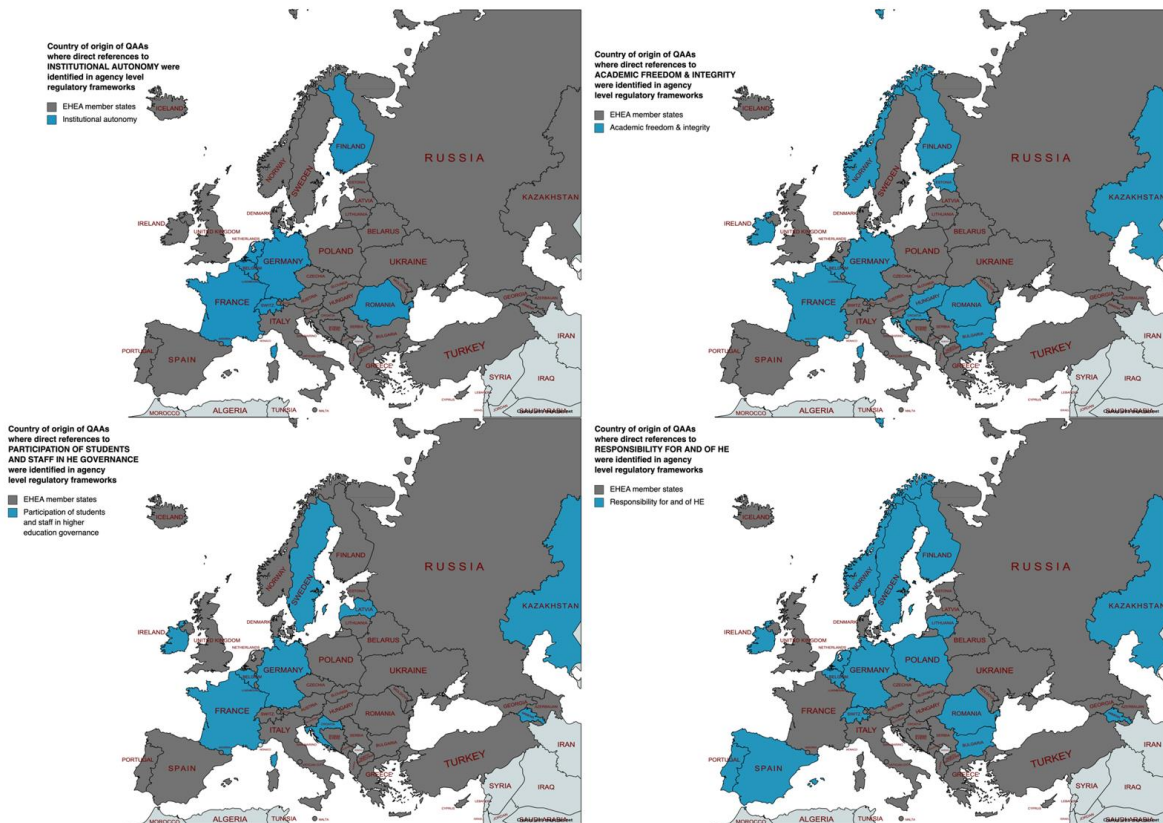


**Figure 9:** EQAR QAAs where direct references to **public responsibility for and of higher education** were identified in agency level regulatory frameworks, and EHEA member states in which they operate



If we consider that quality assurance agencies are most likely to be impactful in their own national higher education system, a more conservative but realistic picture of the impact of agency level regulation regarding Fundamental Values emerges. **Figure 10** maps the country of origin of QAAs where direct references to specific Fundamental Values are identified in agency level regulatory frameworks.

**Figure 10:** Country of origin of QAAs where direct references to specific Fundamental Values are identified in agency level regulatory frameworks



### 3. Meta-synthesis of findings: *de facto* analysis

**This section looks at the practices of quality assurance agencies and answers the question:**

Are Fundamental Values included in the accreditation and evaluation practices of quality assurance agencies? Which values are included?

*De facto* analysis is based on the analysis of the country fact sheets in this report (Section 2 of country fact sheet) which are in turn based on the 17 survey responses received from the QAA respondents.

**Question: Are Fundamental Values included in the accreditation and evaluation practices of quality assurance agencies?**

**Short answer after analysis of country fact sheets:** In some agencies (n=12), but it is unclear from the survey answers and country fact sheets to what extent and how they are put into practice.

When interpreting the results, some caveats should be kept in mind. First, many of the agency responses refer to the inclusion of Fundamental Values in the internal documents and regulatory frameworks of QAAs, but it is not clear in all cases if and how they are put into practice. More research is needed to assess the QA processes through which Fundamental Values are supported or safeguarded. Second, as this is exploratory research, the survey questions were deliberately broad and open-ended to cast a wide net and catch as wide a variety of experiences as possible. The trade-off is that responses are harder to categorize in a clear-cut manner. For the initial analysis, it was considered that the agency includes Fundamental Values in its practice even if it only makes reference to regulatory frameworks in its response. Thirdly, the survey did not enumerate the four EHEA Fundamental Values from the Rome 2020 Communiqué. The variety of survey responses showed that agencies made many free associations and suppositions as to what these values are, including issues as wide-ranging as gender equality and excellence in education. This points to a lack of awareness of the EHEA Fundamental Values, which is an important finding in itself.

Some QAAs conduct quality assurance procedures, not just in their countries of origin, but also in other EHEA member states. However, as previously mentioned, it can reasonably be assumed that the agencies are most likely to be impactful in their own national higher education system. This

was confirmed also by the survey response of SKVC<sup>43</sup> which said that, when carrying out procedures in Lithuania, it is obliged to assure that HEIs fulfil the expectations of the Lithuanian Law on HE; but when operating abroad, it notes that the organization may or may not check requirements of those other countries; this depends upon the context and the purpose of the review. SKVC underlines that this is a significant difference and needs to be properly understood – national agencies working locally have national obligations, while reviews abroad can be purely developmental, enhancement-oriented, with no consideration of larger issues pertaining to the system level. SKVC also notes that each specific procedure, and instruments for various QA processes that agencies undertake, would require separate analysis in regard to operationalization of Fundamental Values.

**Figure 11** depicts both the country of origin (left side) and the operating countries (right side) for QAAs that report including Fundamental Values in their accreditation and evaluation practices (middle of Sanki diagram). However, following the previous observation it would be fair to say that considering just the left side of the Sanki diagram would offer a more realistic picture of the impact of agency level practice regarding Fundamental Values in quality assurance.

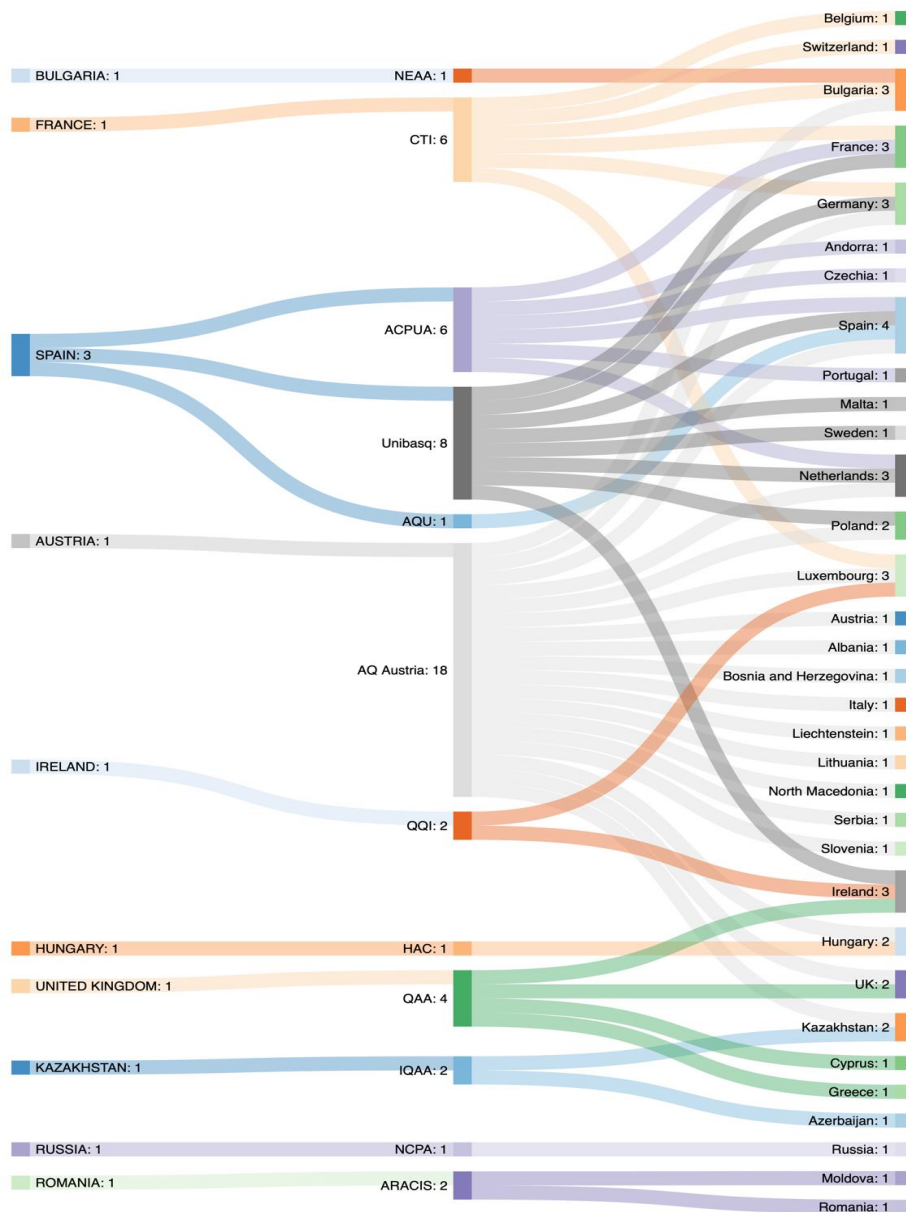


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<sup>43</sup> SKVC [STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS] is a QAA from Lithuania that also operates in Slovenia and Ukraine.

**Figure 11:** Country of origin and operating countries for QAAs that report including Fundamental Values in their accreditation and evaluation practices

**Name of country of origin of QAA: No. of QAAs which include Fundamental Values in practices**      **Name of QAA: No. of countries in which they operate**      **Name of country: No. of QAAs operating in country**



**Table 3** provides an overview of the specific Fundamental Values that QAAs have reported including in their quality assurance procedures.

**Table 3:** EQAR QAAs including Fundamental Values in their accreditation and evaluation practices according to survey responses (n=17)

<b>Fundamental Values</b>	<b>QAAs where references to Fundamental Values were identified in survey responses</b>	<b>Number of QAAs</b>
<b>Institutional autonomy</b>	AQU, NCPA, IQAA, QAA, Unibasq	n=5
<b>Academic freedom and integrity</b>	AIC, AQ Austria, AQU, ARACIS, HAC, IQAA, NCPA, NEAA, QAA, QOI, Unibasq	n=11
<b>Participation of students and staff in higher education governance</b>	AIC, AQ Austria, AQU, ARACIS, QAA, Unibasq	n=6
<b>Public responsibility for and of higher education</b>	ACPUA, AIC, AQU, ARACIS, CTI, Unibasq	n=6

**Note:** It was considered that an agency made reference to the Fundamental Value even if it did so partially (i.e., if it made reference to academic freedom, but not academic integrity it was still counted as making reference to the Fundamental Value). Future research should collect more fine-grained data as there are good arguments to be made for considering the different components of the identified Fundamental Values separately.

The survey also revealed some interesting examples of good practice. Three examples on safeguarding academic integrity are detailed here. Practices for promoting academic integrity include action at the institutional and national level, but also in how QA procedures are set up. QAA's<sup>44</sup> survey answer suggested that it had been successful in promoting academic integrity and campaigning against essay mills by establishing a UK-wide Academic Integrity Charter to which 184 HEIs have signed up<sup>45</sup>: "We produced a range of guidance for higher education institutions to help protect and promote academic integrity, particularly to help them manage the threats arising from essay mills and contract cheating. Most recently, we successfully encouraged the UK Government to legislate to outlaw essay mills in England". Along the same lines, QOI's<sup>46</sup> survey answer mentioned the amendment to the legislation in 2019<sup>47</sup> that came "with additional powers for the agency in the regulation of academic integrity and essay mills". Finally, SKVC's survey

<sup>44</sup> QAA is a quality assurance agency from the UK that also operates in Cyprus, Greece and Ireland.

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/what-we-do/academic-integrity/charter> (Accessed Jan. 12, 2021)

<sup>46</sup> QOI is a quality assurance agency from Ireland that also operates in Luxembourg.

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/28/enacted/en/html> (Accessed Jan. 12, 2021)

response suggests that while their review procedures of higher education institutions are based on the principle of trust, they are supplemented through procedures based on principles of triangulation and exhaustiveness by including all available and relevant pieces of information in their decision making, e.g. self-evaluation reports, evidence from interviews during panel visits, own expert opinion, and other official data. In relation to how to translate these principles to practice, SKVC mentions that:

“to make sure we capture all aspects of academic ethics and integrity in practice, it is a standard feature of our ex-post institutional review procedure, that we ask information from the Academic Ethics Ombudsperson Institution on cases pertaining to the HEI [higher education institution] under review. This cooperation ensures that there is no duplication of evaluation, but also accurate presentation of the situation with difficult cases which may or may not have been properly reflected in the institutional self-evaluation report (SER). Also, in this procedure, experts take into consideration not only SER, but other information provided by ourselves as QA agency (e.g. results of investigation of student complaints submitted to ourselves; results of special audits done on the institution by the Ministry in case there was a need to investigate situations relating to possible violation of the Law on HE&R and other legislation etc.). As said, these sources are complementary to SER, which is a starting point for the experts, but in case of some HEIs, may be very important to have a comprehensive and fair review.”

Regarding the inclusion of Fundamental Values in the accreditation and evaluation practices of quality assurance agencies, ZEvA<sup>48</sup> offers an interesting observation that should be probed in future research. In the survey response, the ZEvA representative stated that safeguarding Fundamental Values in higher education is “not a question for QA but governmental oversight”. As mentioned in the Methodology section of this report, the *de jure* review did not focus on the general regulatory provisions regarding Fundamental Values in higher education at the national level (constitutional or legislative), but only on those provisions specific to quality assurance and QAAs. Still, other agencies also hinted in this direction by mentioning that provisions on Fundamental Values in higher education are included in national legislation and fall under the purview of the government.

Nevertheless, this view highlights an important tension: how much power can QAAs have in safeguarding Fundamental Values when governments, who are supposed to offer protection, are

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<sup>48</sup> ZEvA is a quality assurance agency from Germany that also operates in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, and UK.

the ones that are violating Fundamental Values in higher education. This tension is best captured by the survey respondent from SKVC:

“Usually, national QA agencies are not free to define the framework in which they operate – they can define [their] own methodologies respecting the overall legal framework. So, there are limits to what they can do: they implement policies, not define them; at best – they participate in co-design of the policies. Fundamental Values may be taken for granted as being safeguarded in mature and well-functioning systems, where democracy and the rule of law is respected, gender equality and ecological thinking promoted, etc. But if something goes wrong, and, following the democratic elections no[n] democratic leader[s] are elected to the Parliament and correspondingly, doubtful appointments made at the levels of the Government and the Ministry, the quality assurance agency due to legal hierarchies may also be subject to limitations imposed from the top and may not be in a position to defend and promote the fundamental values.”

The above tension highlights the important fact that QAAs must operate within the confines of the national context and might find themselves unable to act as a “buffer” to safeguard higher education Fundamental Values. In addition, QAAs might also experience resource constraints that limits the attention they can devote to other issues. The survey respondent from Unibasq<sup>49</sup> sees these as one of the main constraints that can lead agencies “to focus their efforts on improving the core processes of HEIs”. How can these tensions be solved?

Quality higher education and Fundamental Values have been intrinsically linked in Bologna Process communications. This has put quality assurance agencies front and center in the debate about safeguarding Fundamental Values. For instance, Robert Quinn, the director of Scholars at Risk, argues that quality assurance measures that do not take academic freedom into account are incomplete. He argues that because academic freedom is central to quality in higher education, when the quality assurance and accreditation community fails to take account of academic freedom they contribute to the erosion of both academic freedom and quality higher education.<sup>50</sup>

Some of the survey respondents have suggested some possible avenues for making Fundamental Values more prominent in quality assurance. One suggestion is to ensure that Fundamental Values are better reflected in the ESG, as clear standards and not just guidelines. It should perhaps be noted that in the 2018–2020 EHEA task force on Fundamental Values there were discussions

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<sup>49</sup> Unibasq is a quality assurance agency from Spain that also operates in France, Germany, Ireland, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland and Sweden.

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/resources/the-future-of-value-based-higher-education-and-quality-assurance-the-future-of-academic-freedom/> (Accessed Nov. 1, 2021)



about the relationship between these values and quality assurance and about whether there should be explicit reference to them if and when a new iteration of the ESG were to be developed. This debate might resurface in the BFUG that is tasked with further developing definitions, indicators and measures on Fundamental Values in advance of the 2024 Tirana ministerial meeting. Another related suggestion is to make Fundamental Values key elements of external evaluations of QAAs. As the SKVC respondent offers, in the case of national agencies “[e]xternal evaluation of QA agencies is an effective instrument to bring to the attention of public authorities some issues on the system level.” Finally, monitoring Fundamental Values as part of the Bologna Process implementation might be another useful instrument to increase the importance of safeguarding these values on the national level of EHEA member states.

Do quality assurance systems support or safeguard Fundamental Values in higher education? The present research took on this central question and provided an exploration of the role of Fundamental Values in the regulatory frameworks and practice of quality assurance agencies in the European Higher Education Area. It did so through a *de jure* analysis of national and agency level regulatory frameworks and a *de facto* analysis of agency practice. The next section of the report presents some conclusions and avenues for further research.



## Conclusions and questions for further exploration

By Milica Popović

The 2020 Rome Communiqué underlined Fundamental Values as an important element of the further strengthening of the EHEA. Of the four values identified, only academic freedom gained a specific definition and place in an Annex to the Communiqué. While waiting for further developments in connection with the next Ministerial meeting planned for 2024 in Tirana, BFUG has been working on identifying future avenues for policy making, monitoring and assessment mechanisms of the spelled-out values in the European Higher Education Area.

This study has been commissioned as part of those efforts, aiming to identify the current state of affairs at the national level, researching the relationship between Fundamental Values and QA procedures and mechanisms, most notably reflected in regulations and practices on QA and external QA agencies.

From a methodological point of view, this study aims to be a “living archive” to be continuously updated, adapted and enhanced. Access to regulatory documents was made difficult due to the fact that they are not always translated in English. Furthermore, the type of study before you requires vast resources and continuous updating. **A study on the EHEA requires large research networks and consultation processes, that we believe BFUG might be capable of providing** if the necessary mechanisms and resources are put in place. Yet, aiming to provide a basic state of the art resource for researchers, policy makers and the BFUG itself, this study presents a starting point for further research. The first step in our research process was a desk-based research of all regulatory frameworks, both at the national level and at the level of agencies. The next step undertaken was a survey, establishing contact with the agencies, and inquiring into their reflections and practices on the matter.

The fact that we managed to obtain only 17 responses to the survey, out of 50 EQAR registered agencies, poses **the question of the roots of reluctance of agencies** to engage in this research and to participate in monitoring of Fundamental Values through QA processes. As it has been underlined, one of the reasons might be the perception of agencies that this is a matter for national government policy making or EHEA guidance. Another possible reason could be the overall lack of resources within the agencies and the volume of work they face, that has made it difficult for the agencies to respond to the survey. In both cases, further encouragement by the EHEA needs to be put in place for Fundamental Values to become a *conditio sine qua non* of understanding of QA in our higher education systems.

Following this line of thought, study results lead us to believe that **future BFUG efforts in strong synergy with key stakeholders in the European QA like EQAR and ENQA [European**

**Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education] are indispensable.** Judging from the survey answers, QA agencies are embedding their regulations and procedures in the European Standards and Guidelines (revised version, 2015). As the ESG refer to multiple purposes of HE,<sup>51</sup> including preparation of students for active citizenship, they also assert the inappropriateness of a monolithic approach to quality and quality assurance in higher education. In Part 1 referring to Internal QA, the ESG refer directly to the participation of staff and students in QA and academic integrity and freedom, as well as students' and stakeholders' participation in design and approval of programs. In Part 3, when asserting the independence of agencies, as necessary for strengthening the relationship with autonomous institutions, the ESG do not stipulate further possible QA standards or guidelines in direct reference to Fundamental Values. The **ESG** are considered the most important backbone of the European QA system, and thus, **need to be included in the efforts of further operationalization of Fundamental Values within the QA systems of the EHEA through a new revision.** This development could be reasonably expected by 2027, upon a possible decision of the EHEA Ministerial conference in 2024 asking for the ESG revision and the E4 to submit a proposed revision to the EHEA Ministerial conference in 2027.

Clearly, **Fundamental Values have not yet gained a stronghold among stakeholders throughout the EHEA, neither per their definitions nor operationalization.** Whereas the 2020 Rome Communiqué perceives academic freedom as necessary for truth, democracy, and independent thinking, these values are in no way directly incorporated into the ESG and thus, into internal QA procedures and regulations of the QA agencies covered by this study. Development of quality culture needs stronger reference to democratic culture<sup>52</sup> and Fundamental Values through EHEA policy documents, but also clear definitions, monitoring and assessment mechanisms, and enhancement of democratic culture within the EHEA itself. Harmonization of quality of European HEIs is unimaginable without an equilibrium of understanding and implementation of Fundamental Values of HE, and today's crisis – notably in academic freedom – highlights the need for further development in this area more than ever.

**Quality higher education must establish, preserve and enhance institutional autonomy, academic freedom and integrity, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education. Without it, we cannot**

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<sup>51</sup> Recommendation Rec (2007)6 by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers on the public responsibility for higher education and research, [https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016805ca6f8](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016805ca6f8) (Accessed Nov. 10, 2021)

<sup>52</sup> Council of Europe (2016) Competences for Democratic Culture: Living Together as Equals in Culturally Diverse Democratic Societies. Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, [www.coe.int/en/web/education/competences-for-democratic-culture](http://www.coe.int/en/web/education/competences-for-democratic-culture) (Accessed Dec. 10, 2021)

**expect students in the EHEA to develop into active citizens, nor progress in research and science in Europe.**

DR

## Country fact sheets

### ALBANIA

#### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

##### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

###### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Law No. 80/2015, “On Higher Education and Scientific Research in Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Albania”.
- Law No. 9741 of 21.05.2007, “On Higher Education in the Republic of Albania” – amended (by laws No. 9832, of 12.11.2007, No. 10307, of 22.07.2010, No. 10493, of 15.12.2011).
- Code of Quality of Higher Education, dated 11.09.2018, approved by DCM No. 531.
- Decision of CM No. 1509, dated 30.07.2008, “On approval of National Strategy on Higher Education, 2008–2013”.
- Decision of CM No. 303, of 01.07.1999 “On establishing the Accreditation System in Higher Education”.
- Decision of CM No. 990, dated 09.12.2015, “On some changes and additions on Decision of CM No. 424, dated 02.06.2010 ‘On the approval of regulation and accreditation system, organization and the activity of institution for external quality assurance’, amended”.

###### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

Code of Quality of Higher Education (2018), as the key legal document regulating QA in Albania, is not accessible in English.

##### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; evalag – Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation.

##### 1.3 Operating agencies’ regulatory frameworks

While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. Evalag includes Fundamental Values of the EHEA in its assessment criteria, most notably institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and participation of students and staff in Higher Education governance. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes.

##### 1.4 National reforms on QA

Due to linguistic inaccessibility of the document, it is not possible to identify whether the Code of Quality of Higher Education, adopted in 2018, specifically refers to any of the Fundamental

Values. Legislative changes in 2015 updated the external quality assurance system of Higher Education in Albania. There seems not to have been substantial changes since.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.ascal.al/en/accreditation/accredited-institutions>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

AQ Austria, as the only agency operating in Albania that has responded to our survey, is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research, and participation of staff and students in governance, while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. However, it is unclear if these same requirements are in any way fully implemented also in Albania. It makes note of the rising contradicting EHEA value requirements and legislative frameworks of specific EHEA countries, and the link with the private HEIs.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.

## ANDORRA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Llei 12/2008, del 12 de juny, d'ordenació de l'ensenyament superior [Law on Higher Education of 12 June 2008].
- Decret del 14-04-2010 pel qual s'aprova el reglament d'ordenació de les titulacions universitàries estatals [Regulation for the organization of state higher education degree of 14 April 2010].
- Llei 9/2016, del 28 de juny, de creació de l'Agència de Qualitat de l'Ensenyament Superior d'Andorra (AQUA) [Law on Creation of the Agency for the Quality Assurance in Higher Education].

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

The Law on HE guarantees the work of the Agency for the Quality Assurance in Higher Education to be guided by principles of independence, transparency, professionalism, and international recognition. Institutional Autonomy is one of the key guiding principles, as well as participation of students and staff. There is no identified direct guarantee of Academic Freedom linked to the Quality Assurance processes.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

ACPUA – Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

ACPUA basic values underline the importance of student participation in QA processes, and social responsibility and transparency assuring public access to reliable, timely, clear and precise information which relates to the fundamental value of public responsibility for and of higher education. No direct relation between QA processes and Fundamental Values has been established.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

The Law from 2016 assured wider participation of stakeholders in the QA procedures and processes. The Law on Creation of the Agency for the Quality Assurance in Higher Education from 2016 expanded participation of all Higher Education stakeholders, including private sector, students and academic staff in order to assure independence and autonomy.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited degrees can be found here:

<https://www.ensenyamentsuperior.ad/titulacions-estatals-d-ensenyament-superior>

## 2.2 *QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

ACPUA underlines its respect for and promotion of Fundamental Values that Spanish legislation has recently introduced (i.e. SDGs, Agenda 2030, democracy, inclusion and diversity, gender perspective), yet these values do not all fully correspond to the defined EHEA values.

## 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

ACPUA wanted to highlight as a good practice example its experience in gender mainstreaming and respect for sexual diversity through its Program ACPUA – Equality and Diversity. Within its scope of action, ACPUA has already been working for some years in favour of gender equality opportunities, the reduction of the gender gap in higher education, and the introduction of the gender perspective. It has been maintaining dialogue with associations and groups such as AMIT-Aragón (Association of Women Researchers and Technologists of Aragon), EUFEM (University Platform for Feminist and Gender Studies) and the Chair on Equality and Gender at the University of Zaragoza. From the specific point of view of the introduction of the gender perspective, it has exchanged methodologies and information on diagnostic elements and evaluation indicators with Spanish agencies especially committed to equality issues, such as AQU Catalunya and Unibasq. Since 2018 it has been including in its activity reports a report on gender parity and equality in the composition of committees and panels of the Agency. In 2019 the evaluation perspective of this commitment to equality was strengthened thanks to the [ALCAEUS](#) program for the certification of centers according to Agenda 2030. In 2020, the aim is to give a considerable boost to this commitment to equality, which is already required by national and regional legislation. This will be done in the following way.

- Taking into account the emerging methodologies in the EHEA, a framework document will be developed to provide guidelines and indicators on the gender perspective for their subsequent introduction into evaluation protocols, both for degrees and for research activity.
- The design of a basic table of indicators that will make it possible to promote and make visible the commitment of the centers that make up the University System of Aragon to respect sexual diversity and the recognition and protection of the gender identity that each person adopts.

This activity should be considered as a constitutive part of the EHEA Fundamental Value of public responsibility of higher education. It remains unclear whether it is fully implemented in Andorra, or other countries in which ACPUA operates beyond Spain.

## 2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

ACPUA believes “agencies can act as catalysts of the Fundamental Values for our HEI systems” but the challenge remains the development of good indicators and, in its view, additional efforts for building the case for all stakeholders.



## ARMENIA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Law No. HO-62-N of 14 December 2004 on Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education/official translation of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia of 29.05.2015.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

The principles of QA, as prescribed by the Law, ensure objectivity, continuity, transparency, and publicity of assessment. No direct references to the Fundamental Values were identified.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

ANQA – National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EKKA – Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education; HCERES – High Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement; NVAO – Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

ANQA recognises that quality should yield “the confidence of the educational community and the public”, indirectly also in its Guiding Principles calling upon accountability of the institution, which could be understood as a reference to the public responsibility of higher education. Its standards demand participation of students and staff in higher education governance, as well as in QA processes. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EKKA directly refers in its guidelines to the standard of Academic Ethics, which refers to the fundamental value of Academic Integrity. HCERES strongly underlines the importance of research integrity. It also understands the institutional positioning of the HEI as related to the value of public responsibility of higher education. Referring to institutional strategy, HCERES underlines institutional autonomy and responsibility, in social matters and sustainable development. Discussing institutional governance, HCERES asserts the importance of university democracy and participation of staff and students in QA procedures. Regarding research policies, HCERES underlines academic integrity and, further discussing students, asserts student participation in governance. MusiQue standards outline public interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures. NVAO underlines institutional autonomy and public responsibility of higher education, further establishing the participation of staff and students in QA procedures.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

A draft law on higher education has been in the pipeline since 2019 and was sent to the Constitutional Court for review in April 2021. There has been no information on the developments since.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<http://www.anqa.am/en/institutional-accreditation-state-register/>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

Given the lack of direct linkages between QA and Fundamental Values of HE in the national legislation, their relevance in specific accreditation processes largely depends on which external agency has conducted the review and leaves the system highly unequal given the diverse levels of inclusion of Fundamental Values in the agencies' required standards. No external QA agencies operating in Armenia responded to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

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### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

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## AUSTRIA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Federal Act on the Organization of Universities and their Studies (Universities Act 2002 – UG), Federal Law Gazette I No. 120/2002 as amended by: Federal Law Gazette I No. 20/2021.
- Federal Act on the External Quality Assurance in Higher Education and the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education – HS-Q SG), Federal Law Gazette I No. 74/2011 as amended by: Federal Law Gazette I No. 77/2020.

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

There were no explicit provisions identified.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AAQ – Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance; ACQUIN – Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute; AHPGS – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences; AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; EQ-Arts – Enhancing Quality in the Arts; evalag – Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; FINEEC – Finnish Education Evaluation Centre; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement; NVAO – Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders; ZEVA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AAQ directly refers to institutional autonomy with public responsibility of higher education (through accountability), as well as participation of students and staff in QA procedures. ACQUIN refers to the necessity of the higher education institution to be embedded in its scientific and social environment, thus recalling the value of public responsibility of higher education; participation of students and staff in higher education governance; and regulations of the HEI that provide for conflict resolutions that preserve academic freedom. AHPGS in its handbook for program accreditation directly states that QA policies at HEI should support academic integrity and freedom. AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. EQ-Arts besides general references to the ESG and participation of students and staff in QA procedures, does not outline direct references to the Fundamental Values. Evalag includes Fundamental Values of the EHEA in its assessment criteria, most notably institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and participation of students and staff in higher education governance. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for

valuing student participation in the QA processes. FINEEC underlines institutional autonomy, public responsibility of higher education through “ensuring that they are up to date with regard to the latest research findings as well as the changing needs of the society and working life”, academic integrity through “responsible conduct of research”, and participation of students and staff in QA procedures. MusiQue standards outline public interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures. NVAO underlines institutional autonomy and public responsibility of higher education, further establishing the participation of staff and students in QA procedures. ZEvA refers to autonomy and responsibility and, in the description of its mission, it reasserts “central ideas and principles...still shared by all” including academic freedom and autonomy.

The large number of operating agencies in Austria provide for a large diversity of the level of inclusion of Fundamental Values in the QA procedures, especially given that the national legislative framework does not make an explicit link in the provisions referring to Quality Assurance.

#### *1.4 National reforms on QA*

The Federal Act on the External Quality Assurance in HE and the Agency for QA and Accreditation Austria was amended in 2020.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/en/Topics/Higher-education---universities/Higher-education-system.html>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research, and participation of staff and students in governance, while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It makes note of the increasingly contradictory EHEA value requirements and legislative frameworks of specific EHEA countries, and the link with the private HEIs.

ZEvA has stated that Fundamental Values are “not a question for QA but governmental oversight”.

Other agencies operating in Austria did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.

## AZERBAIJAN

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan No. 833-IIIIG on Education of June 19, 2009.
- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan No. 192-VIQD on amendments to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Education” of 6 November 2020.
- Executive Order No. 167 of 28 September 2010 of Cabinet of Ministers of Azerbaijan Republic on Rules about accreditation of educational establishments.

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No data due to language inaccessibility.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AHPGS – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; IQAA – Independent Agency for Quality Assurance in Education.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies’ regulatory frameworks

AHPGS in its handbook for program accreditation directly states that QA policies at HEI should support academic integrity and freedom. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. IQAA in its standards requires participation of staff in QA procedures, policies supporting academic integrity, participation of students and staff in governance and responsibility of higher education.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

New amendments on the Law on Education were adopted in 2020 but it is unclear whether they relate directly to the QA procedures.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://edu.gov.az/az/higher-education/ali-tehsil-muessiseleri>

#### 2.2 QA agencies’ practices in accreditation and evaluation

IQAA, the only agency operating in Azerbaijan that responded to our survey, underlines the importance of values of institutional autonomy and academic integrity, in its seat country Kazakhstan. No other agencies operating in Azerbaijan responded to our survey.

#### 2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices

IQAA underlines promoting excellence, yet not in particular related to Fundamental Values.

#### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

IQAA underlines possible challenges in terms of lack of resources and institutional and legislative pitfalls, but rather widely related to the HE reforms processes rather than the relationship between QA and Fundamental Values.

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## BELARUS

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 *National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system*

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Republic of Belarus Education Code of January 13, 2011 (No. 243-W).
- The National Qualifications Framework of Higher Education of the Republic of Belarus of December 30, 2019 approved by the Minister of Education of the Republic of Belarus.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No data due to language inaccessibility.

#### 1.2 *A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country*

IAAR – Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating.

#### 1.3 *Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks*

IAAR standards rely exclusively on ESG.

#### 1.4 *National reforms on QA*

A new law was discussed in the parliament in 2021 but has not yet been adopted to the best of our knowledge.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 *Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.indembminsk.in/docs/List%20of%20accredited%20universities%20in%20Republic%20of%20Belarus.docx>

#### 2.2 *QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

IAAR, based in Kazakhstan but operating also in Belarus, focuses on the ESG implementation in its QA procedures but it remains unclear how these demands are implemented in evaluation processes in Belarus.

#### 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

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#### 2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

IAAR stated that, in its view, effective implementation of Fundamental Values identified in the 2020 Rome Communiqué of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) requires foremost the

“authorized bodies [Ministries of Education]...in order to improve deeper understanding and increase commitment of the governments to the Fundamental Values”.

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## BELGIUM

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Decree of the Flemish Community on the structure of higher education in Flanders of the 4th of April 2003.
- The Landscape Decree for Higher Education of 7 November 2013 (Décret du 7 novembre 2013 définissant le paysage de l'enseignement supérieur et l'organisation académique des études, 2013).

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No direct provisions regarding Fundamental Values were identified.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AEQES – Agence pour l'Évaluation de la Qualité de l'Enseignement Supérieur; AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; CTI – Engineering Degree Commission; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; EQ-Arts – Enhancing Quality in the Arts; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement; NVAO – Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders; QANU – Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities; VLUHR QA – Quality Assurance Unit of the Flemish Higher Education Council; ZEvA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AEQES Strategic Plan 2021–2025 refers directly to Fundamental Values of higher education, planning a pilot phase institutional evaluation which will consider these values. AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. CTI underlines institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in QA procedures and in governance, and responsibility of higher education. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. EQ-Arts besides general references to the ESG and participation of students and staff in QA procedures does not outline direct references to the Fundamental Values. MusiQue standards outline public interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures. NVAO underlines institutional autonomy and public responsibility of higher education, further establishing the participation of staff and students in QA procedures. QANU will no longer exist after December 31, 2021. VLUHR QA does not show direct links to the Fundamental Values, except for general compliance with the ESG. ZEvA refers to autonomy and responsibility and, in the description of their mission, it reasserts “central ideas and principles...still shared by all” including academic freedom and autonomy.

Taking into account the different frameworks of the Flemish and French community in Belgium, external evaluation practices and standards remain closely linked to the ones proscribed by AEQES for the French and NVAO for the Flemish Community.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

The most important development to follow will be the AEQES pilot phase institutional evaluation, which is planned until 2025, and from a review of current documents might include references to Fundamental Values, but this remains to be determined.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.studyineurope.eu/study-in-belgium/higher-education-institutions>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

CTI plans to strengthen its criteria and guidelines from 2022 with a stronger emphasis on environmental and social issues, which could be regarded as the Fundamental Value of public responsibility of higher education, including criteria such as: to build an inclusive and sustainable society; equality of all persons, regardless of gender, social background, disability; promotion and positive actions to guarantee access to HE and smooth integration for persons from different backgrounds, gender and special needs; ethics and deontology at school and in the profession; social responsibility of the engineer and taking into account the environmental impact of engineering and ecology. It is unclear whether these criteria will be equally implemented in countries outside of France where CTI operates.

ZEvA has stated that Fundamental Values are “not a question for QA but governmental oversight”.

Other agencies operating in Belgium did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

CTI understands its role as crucial for the promotion of Fundamental Values, and believes its promotion of these was an incentive for certain private HEIs to work on their widening access programs and promotion of gender inclusiveness.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

CTI believes that promotion of Fundamental Values within QA procedures further encourages a spill over effect to the educational processes themselves, in helping educate engineers as active citizens.

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina, No. 59/07).
- Law on Change and Amendment to the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina, No. 59/09).
- Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Srpska, No. 67/20).
- Zakon o obezbjeđenju kvaliteta u visokom obrazovanju Republike Srpske (Službeni glasnik Republike Srpske, br. 67/20) – Law on Quality Assurance in Higher Education of Republika Srpska, No. 67/20.
- Law on Higher Education in the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, No. 30/09).
- Law on Higher Education in the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, No. 30/09).
- Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Una-Sana Canton, No. 8/09).
- Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Posavina Canton, No. 1/10).
- Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Tuzla Canton, No. 7/16).
- Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Zenica Doboј Canton, No. 6/09).
- Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Central Bosna Canton, No. 4/13).
- Law on Higher Education in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton (Official Gazette of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, No. 4/12).
- Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of the West Herzegovina Canton, No. 10/09).
- Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Sarajevo Canton, No. 33/17).
- Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Canton 10, No. 9/09).
- Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Bosnia-Podrinje Canton, No. 2/10).
- Decision on Adoption of Priorities for Higher Education Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the Period 2016–2026 (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina, No. 36/16).

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in BiH were adopted in 2007 and are fully based on the ESGs. The new Law in Republika Srpska, adopted in 2020, demands that statutes of the HEIs guarantee Academic Freedom, and participation of students and staff in governance – most

often provisions which find their place in the general provisions of the legislation on higher education, without direct reference to QA. The one provision on QA refers to the responsibility of higher education, and QA is linked to the general term of European standards. For this study, we did not conduct a thorough analysis of all 17 legislative frameworks of BiH, as most often the legislative frameworks in BiH remain very similar. For more detailed information, further analysis would be required.

### *1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country*

AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; ASHE – Agency for Science and Higher Education; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.

### *1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks*

AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. ASHE calls upon freedom of scientific research in its general statement, and within its QA standards recognises participation of students and staff in governance. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German.

### *1.4 National reforms on QA*

At the federal level of BiH, there have not been any fundamental changes. The complex panorama of HE legislative framework of BiH continues to influence the HE system in the country. In 2020, new laws on HE and on QA in Republika Srpska were adopted and in 2017, in Sarajevo Canton there was a new law on HE.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

[http://www.heg.gov.ba/akreditacija\\_vsu/Default.aspx](http://www.heg.gov.ba/akreditacija_vsu/Default.aspx)

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research, and participation of staff and students in governance while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It makes note of the increasingly contradictory EHEA value requirements and legislative frameworks of specific EHEA countries, and the link with the private HEIs.

Other agencies operating in Bosnia and Herzegovina did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions

towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.

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## BULGARIA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Prom. SG. 38/21 Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria of May 2010, amend. SG. 81/15 Oct. 2010, amend. SG. 101/28 Dec. 2010, amend. SG. 68/2 Aug. 2013, amend. and suppl. SG. 30/3 April 2018, amend. SG. 17/26 Feb. 2019, amend. SG. 17/25 Feb. 2020.
- Prom. SG 112/27 Act of the Republic of Bulgaria on Higher Education of December 1995 last amend. and suppl. SG. 17/25 Feb. 2020
- The Action Plan to the Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2014–2020
- Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2021–2030, SG. 2 Jan. 2021.

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

While the Law details accreditation and evaluation processes, only one provision introduces among the criteria “other criteria related to the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European higher education area”, without specifically naming the ESG. Such a wide formulation would be open to interpretations if the Fundamental Values could be perceived as standards, but it does not seem that this was the aim of the legislator.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

ACQUIN – Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; BAC – British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education; CTI – Engineering Degree Commission; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; NEAA – National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies’ regulatory frameworks

ACQUIN refers to the necessity of the higher education institution to be embedded in its scientific and social environment, thus recalling the value of public responsibility of higher education; participation of students and staff in higher education governance; and regulations of the HEI that provide for conflict resolutions that preserve academic freedom. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. BAC makes no direct reference to the Fundamental Values. CTI underlines institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in QA procedures and in governance, and responsibility of higher education. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. NEAA, within its criteria, underlines accountability of the institution (public responsibility of higher education) and the need for QA institutional policy which supports “academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud”, as well as participation of students and staff in QA procedures.

## 1.4 *National reforms on QA*

The Strategy for Development of HE 2014–2020 gave the NEAA a monopoly on accreditation and evaluation matters. Changes in 2020 to the Law on HE re-established the possibility of other external QA agencies being involved in program evaluation while reaffirming NEEA’s role as the only body able to provide institutional accreditation. Many amendments introduced in the Law in 2020 relate to the accreditation and evaluation processes without directly referring to the Fundamental Values. These have also further streamlined accreditation procedures and are aimed at simplifying the continuous evaluation processes.

## 2 **Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### 2.1 *Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions in Bulgaria can be found here:

<https://rvu.nacid.bg/HomeEn/IndexEn>

### 2.2 *QA agencies’ practices in accreditation and evaluation*

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research, and participation of staff and students in governance while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It makes note of the rising contradictions in EHEA value requirements and legislative frameworks of specific EHEA countries, and the link with the private HEIs.

CTI plans to strengthen its criteria and guidelines from 2022 with a stronger emphasis on environmental and social issues, which could be regarded as the Fundamental Value of public responsibility of higher education, including criteria such as: to build an inclusive and sustainable society; equality of all persons, regardless of gender, social background, disability; promotion and positive actions to guarantee access to HE and smooth integration for persons from different backgrounds, gender and special needs; ethics and deontology at school and in the profession; social responsibility of the engineer and taking into account the environmental impact of engineering and ecology. It is unclear whether these criteria will be equally implemented in countries outside of France where CTI operates.

NEAA focuses on academic integrity and anti-plagiarism practices in its internal regulations.

Other agencies operating in Bulgaria did not respond to our survey.

### 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

CTI understands its role as crucial for the promotion of Fundamental Values, and believes its promotion of these was an incentive for certain private HEIs to work on their widening access programs and promotion of gender inclusiveness.

NEAA underlines its work in the fight against plagiarism and in promotion of academic integrity.

### 2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions

towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.

CTI believes that promotion of Fundamental Values within QA procedures further encourages a spill over effect to the educational processes themselves, in helping educate engineers as active citizens.

NEAA did not respond to this question.

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## CROATIA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Act on Scientific Activity and Higher Education (Official Gazette, 123/03, 198/03, 105/04, 174/04, 02/07, 46/07).
- Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (Official Gazette, 45/09).
- Ordinance on the Content of Licence and Conditions for Issuing Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (Official Gazette, 24/2010).

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

In the Act on QA, quality per definition refers to the public responsibility of higher education, but otherwise does not establish criteria – they are established by the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE), which explicitly refers only to the ESG.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

ASHE – Agency for Science and Higher Education; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; NVAO – Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

ASHE calls upon freedom of scientific research in its general statement, and within its QA standards recognises participation of students and staff in governance. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. NVAO underlines institutional autonomy and public responsibility of higher education, further establishing the participation of staff and students in QA procedures.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

No relevant reforms were identified.

## 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.azvo.hr/en/higher-education/higher-education-institutions-in-the-republic-of-croatia>

#### 2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation

No agencies operating in Croatia responded to our survey.

2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

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2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

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## CYPRUS

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- N.234(I)/2002 The Open University of Cyprus Law of 2002 (Official Gazette Παρ.Ι(Ι), Αρ. 3670, 31.12.2002] amended by Law N. 35(I)/2010 (Official Gazette Part Ι(Ι), Nr. 4238, 31.03.2010).
- N.68(I)/1996 The Recognition of Higher and Tertiary Education Qualifications and Provision of Relevant Information Laws of 1996 (Official Gazette, Part Ι(Ι), Nr. 3057, 03.05.1996] [Law N. 68(I)/1996 was amended by Laws N. 48(I)/1998 – N. 30(I)/2015).
- N. 67(I)/1996 The Tertiary Education Schools Law (Official Gazette, Part Ι(Ι), Nr. 3057, 03.05.1996] [Law N. 67(I)/1996 amended by Laws N. 15(I)/1997 – N. 53(I)/2013).
- N. 109(I)/2005 The Private Universities (Establishment, Operation and Control) Law of 2005 (Official Gazette, Part Ι(Ι), Nr. 4019, Ε.Ε. Παρ. Ι (Ι), 29.07.2005] [Law 109(I)/2005 was amended by Laws N. 197(I)/2007 – N. 74(I)/2011).
- Law No. 136(I) of 2015 on Quality Assurance and Certification of the Higher Education and on the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Law amended by Law N. 47(I)/2016.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No specific references to Fundamental Values were identified.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AHPGS – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences; AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; CYQAA – The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; QAA – Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AHPGS in its handbook for program accreditation directly states that QA policies at HEI should support academic integrity and freedom. AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. CYQAA does not make explicit reference to the Fundamental Values. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. QAA only refers to student participation in QA procedures.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

A Law which was adopted in 2015 and amended in 2016 regulates QA and accreditation and the QA agency in Cyprus.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.dipae.ac.cy/index.php/en/accreditation-en/accredited-institutions-en>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

QAA, as well as firmly embedding its principles in the UK regulatory frameworks supporting institutional autonomy, student and staff participation in QA procedures and governance, also in its latest QAA Strategy document refers to academic integrity and student engagement. It is unclear how much of the same principles are being implemented in Cyprus, as well as in the UK.

Other agencies operating in Cyprus did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

QAA seeks to “encourage enhancement of quality, beyond baseline regulatory requirements”, firmly involving all stakeholders, including students and staff, and encouraging HEIs to implement the same principles in their internal processes. It is also active in promotion of academic integrity and prevention of cheating and fraud.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

QAA sees an opportunity for furthering student and staff participation in the transition to a digital environment as a consequence of Covid-19 pandemic, yet this brings up more threats to academic integrity, as essay mills and cheaters look to exploit new technologies and processes. It also notes that if national governmental priorities do not align with the Fundamental Values, this could be a barrier for including them in QA practices.

## CZECH REPUBLIC

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Act No. 111/1998 Coll. On Higher Education Institutions of 22 April 1998 and on Amendments and Supplements to Some Other Acts (The Higher Education Act), amended by Act No. 210/2000 Coll., Act No. 147/2001 Coll., Act No. 362/2003 Coll., Act No. 96/2004 Coll., Act No. 121/2004 Coll., Act No. 436/2004 Coll., Act No. 473/2004 Coll., Act No. 562/2004 Coll., Act No. 342/2005 Coll., Act No. 552/2005 Coll., Act No. 161/2006 Coll., Act No. 165/2006 Coll., Act No. 310/2006 Coll., Act No. 624/2006 Coll., Act No. 261/2007 Coll., Act No. 296/2007 Coll., Act No. 189/2008 Coll. and Act No. 110/2009 Coll.
- Government Regulation No. 274/2016 Coll. On standards for accreditation in higher education of 24 August 2016.

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

The law implicitly refers to responsibility of higher education; institutional autonomy through mention of self-governance; and explicitly to students and staff participation in QA procedures. No other Fundamental Values are directly referred to.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

ACPUA – Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education; AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; BAC – British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; EQ-Arts – Enhancing Quality in the Arts; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

ACPUA basic values underline the importance of student participation in QA processes, and social responsibility and transparency assuring public access to reliable, timely, clear and precise information, which relates to the Fundamental Value of public responsibility for and of higher education. AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. BAC makes no direct reference to the Fundamental Values. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. EQ-Arts besides general references to the ESG and participation of students and staff in QA procedures does not outline direct references to the Fundamental Values. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. IEP directly refers to ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom, and student and staff participation in governance. MusiQue standards outline public interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures.

#### 1.4 *National reforms on QA*

Standards for accreditation were adopted in 2016 but no further reforms, especially in regard to the Fundamental Values, were identified.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### 2.1 *Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited study programs can be found here:

<https://www.msmt.cz/file/15150/>

### 2.2 *QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

ACPUA underlines its respect for and promotion of Fundamental Values that Spanish legislation has recently introduced (i.e. SDGs, Agenda 2030, democracy, inclusion and diversity, gender perspective), yet these values do not all fully correspond to the defined EHEA values.

Other agencies operating in the Czech Republic did not respond to our survey.

### 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

ACPUA wanted to highlight as a good practice example its experience in gender mainstreaming and respect for sexual diversity through its Program ACPUA – Equality and Diversity. Within its scope of action, ACPUA has already been working for some years in favour of gender equality opportunities, the reduction of the gender gap in higher education and the introduction of the gender perspective. It has been maintaining dialogue with associations and groups such as AMIT-Aragón (Association of Women Researchers and Technologists of Aragon), EUFEM (University Platform for Feminist and Gender Studies) or the Chair on Equality and Gender at the University of Zaragoza. From the specific point of view of the introduction of the gender perspective, it has exchanged methodologies and information on diagnostic elements and evaluation indicators with Spanish agencies especially committed to equality issues, such as AQU Catalunya and Unibasq. Since 2018 it has included in its activity reports a report on gender parity and equality in the composition of committees and panels of the Agency. In 2019 the evaluation perspective of this commitment to equality was strengthened thanks to the [ALCAEUS](#) program for the certification of centers according to Agenda 2030. In 2020, the aim is to give a considerable boost to this commitment to equality, which is already required by national and regional legislation. This will be done in the following way.

- Taking into account the emerging methodologies in the EHEA, a framework document will be developed to provide guidelines and indicators on the gender perspective for their subsequent introduction into evaluation protocols, both for degrees and for research activity.
- The design of a basic table of indicators that will make it possible to promote and make visible the commitment of the centers that make up the University System of Aragon to respect sexual diversity and the recognition and protection of the gender identity that each person adopts.

This activity should be considered as a constitutive part of the EHEA Fundamental Value of public responsibility of higher education. It remains unclear whether it is fully implemented in other countries in which ACPUA operates beyond Spain, like the Czech Republic .

#### 2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

ACPUA believes “agencies can act as catalysts of the Fundamental Values for our HEI systems” but the challenge remains the development of good indicators and, in its view, additional efforts for building the case for all stakeholders.

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## DENMARK

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Act on Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (Bekendtgørelse af lov om akkreditering af videregående uddannelsesinstitutioner), LBK nr 173 of 02/03/2018.
- Executive Order on Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Approval of Higher Education Programmes (Akkrediteringsbekendtgørelsen), BEK nr 853 of 12/08/2019.
- Act on University Programmes (Uddannelsesbekendtgørelsen), BEK nr 20 of 09/01/2020.
- Act on Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (Bekendtgørelse af lov om akkreditering af videregående uddannelsesinstitutioner), LBK No. 1667 of 12/08/2021.
- Executive Order on accreditation of higher education institutions and approval of higher education, BEK No. 1558 of 02/07/2021.

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

Unfortunately, the legal documents are currently accessible only in Danish, and this has prevented legal analysis.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AI – The Danish Accreditation Institution; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; NOKUT – Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education; NVAO – Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders; ZEvA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AI calls upon ESG and most notably student and staff participation in QA procedures. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. NOKUT refers to public responsibility of higher education, academic freedom, through the demand of respect of the relevant University Act and refers directly to the ESG. NVAO underlines institutional autonomy and public responsibility of higher education, further establishing the participation of staff and students in QA procedures. ZEvA refers to autonomy and responsibility, and in the description of its mission it reasserts “central ideas and principles...still shared by all” including academic freedom and autonomy.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

Several legal acts were amended and/or adopted in recent years. The Accreditation Act from 2013 still applies with two amendments. On 30 November 2017, the Danish Parliament (the Folketing) passed the current Accreditation Act that came into force on 1 January 2018. Unfortunately, the legal documents are currently accessible only in Danish thus preventing a more thorough legal analysis and identification of relevant reforms.



## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://ufm.dk/en/education/higher-education/the-danish-higher-education-system/hei-list#portal-logo-wrapper>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

ZEvA has stated that Fundamental Values are “not a question for QA but governmental oversight”.

Other agencies operating in Denmark did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

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### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

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## ESTONIA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act: 10.06.1998, Riigi Teataja (State Gazette) RT I 1998,61,980 (Rakenduskõrgkooli seadus).
- Higher Education Act: 01.09.2019, Riigi Teataja (State Gazette) RT I, 19.03.2019, 12 ((Rakenduskõrgkooli seadus), amended by Government of the Republic Act and Other Acts Amendment Act (Establishment of the Education and Youth Board, Appointment of the Language Inspectorate as the Language Board): 16.06.2020, Riigi Teataja (State Gazette) RT I, 16.06.2020, 1.
- Government of the Republic Regulation No. 178 of 18 December 2008, Standard of Higher Education.
- Private Schools Act: 03.06.1998, Riigi Teataja (State Gazette) RT I 1998, 57, 859 (Rakenduskõrgkooli seadus), *last amended* by RT I, 19.03.2019, 12 of 01.09.2019.

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

Except for referring to international standards for accreditation and quality assurance, legal documents do not explicitly refer to Fundamental Values.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; EKKA – Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. EKKA refers to public responsibility of higher education as a standard of service to society, participation of students and staff in governance and academic ethics, without referring directly to academic freedom. MusiQue standards outline public interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

Based on comprehensive analysis led from 2017 and drafted in the Conceptual Plan for Quality Assessment in Higher Education for 2020, new proposals were made and thus included in the new legislative acts regarding the accreditation and evaluation procedures. From 2020, institutional accreditation has come to the forefront and there are plans to replace study programs group assessments with thematic evaluations.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.hm.ee/en/activities/higher-education>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

No agencies operating in Estonia responded to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

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### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

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## FINLAND

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Universities act 558/2009, last amended by Act 644/2016.
- Act on the implementation of the Universities Act 559/2009.
- Universities of applied sciences act 932/2014.
- Act on the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (1295/2013).

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

Beyond the ESG, no direct references to Fundamental Values were found.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AQAS refers solely to the ESG in their criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

In 2014, FINEEC – Finish Education Evaluation Centre was instituted as the key national QA agency.

## 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://norric.org/nordbalt/finland/>

#### 2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation

No agencies operating in Finland responded to our survey.

#### 2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices

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#### 2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices

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## FRANCE

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- LOI n° 2020-1674 du 24 décembre 2020 de programmation de la recherche pour les années 2021 à 2030 et portant diverses dispositions relatives à la recherche et à l'enseignement supérieur [Law No. 2020-1674 of December 24, 2020 on Planning of Research for the Years 2021 to 2030 and several dispositions regarding research and higher education].
- Loi n° 2013-660 du 22 juillet 2013 relative à l'enseignement supérieur et à la recherche [Law No. 2013-660 of 22 July 2013 on Higher Education and Research], Journal Officiel de la République Française [J.O.] [Official Gazette of France].
- Loi n° 2006-450 du 18 avril 2006 de programme pour la recherche [Law No. 2006-450 of 18 April 2006 for research guidance], Journal Officiel de la République Française [J.O.] [Official Gazette of France].
- Loi n° 2007-1199 du 10 août 2007 relative aux libertés et responsabilités des universités [Law No. 2007-1199 of 10 August 2007 relating to university freedoms and responsibilities], Journal Officiel de la République Française [J.O.] [Official Gazette of France].

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

For the evaluation of HE and Research in France, the law underlines the importance of scientific (academic) integrity, participation of students in QA procedures and public responsibility of higher education, through the concept of valorization of research.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

ACPUA – Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education; AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; CTI – Engineering Degree Commission; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; FINEEC – Finnish Education Evaluation Centre; HCERES – High Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement; NCEQE – National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement; NVAO – Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders; Unibasq – Agency for Quality of the Basque University System.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

ACPUA basic values underline the importance of student participation in QA processes, and social responsibility and transparency assuring public access to reliable, timely, clear and precise information which relates to the Fundamental Value of public responsibility for and of higher education. No direct relation between QA processes and Fundamental Values was established. AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. CTI underlines institutional autonomy, participation

of students and staff in QA procedures and in governance, and responsibility of higher education. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. FINEEC underlines institutional autonomy, public responsibility of higher education through “ensuring that they are up to date with regard to the latest research findings as well as the changing needs of the society and working life”, academic integrity through “responsible conduct of research”, participation of students and staff in QA procedures. HCERES underlines institutional autonomy and responsibility of higher education, participation of students and staff in QA procedures, academic integrity, participation of students in governance. MusiQue standards outline public interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures. NCEQE calls upon international standards and the ESG, yet makes no direct reference to Fundamental Values. NVAO underlines institutional autonomy and public responsibility of higher education, further establishing the participation of staff and students in QA procedures. Unibasq refers to the ESG and international standards.

#### 1.4 *National reforms on QA*

A new law on HE was introduced in 2013 and various reforms, through LPPR (La loi de programmation de la recherche pour les années 2021 à 2030 et portant diverses dispositions relatives à la recherche et à l’enseignement supérieur adopted in 2020), changed the legal landscape in HE. No specific changes in regard to the relationship between Fundamental Values and QA were identified.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### 2.1 *Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

Information on accredited degrees can be found here:

<https://www.campusfrance.org/en/certification-labels-institutes-France>

### 2.2 *QA agencies’ practices in accreditation and evaluation*

ACPUA underlines its respect for and promotion of Fundamental Values that Spanish legislation has recently introduced (i.e. SDGs, Agenda 2030, democracy, inclusion and diversity, gender perspective), yet these values do not all fully correspond to the defined EHEA values.

CTI plans to strengthen its criteria and guidelines from 2022 with a stronger emphasis on environmental and social issues, which could be regarded as the Fundamental Value of public responsibility of higher education, including criteria such as: to build an inclusive and sustainable society; equality of all persons, regardless of gender, social background, disability; promotion and positive actions to guarantee access to HE and smooth integration for persons from different backgrounds, gender and special needs; ethics and deontology at school and in the profession; social responsibility of the engineer and taking into account the environmental impact of engineering and ecology. It is unclear whether these criteria will be equally implemented in countries outside of France where CTI operates.

Unibasq notes how the regulatory framework in Spain, where the agency is based, identifies issues related to social responsibility of universities, and in particular the objectives of the 2030 agenda. Yet, the objectives lack clear operationalization. Also, Unibasq evaluation procedures do not develop further Fundamental Values.

Other agencies operating in France did not respond to our survey.

### 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

ACPUA wanted to highlight as a good practice example its experience in gender mainstreaming and respect for sexual diversity through its Program ACPUA – Equality and Diversity. Within its scope of action, ACPUA has already been working for some years in favour of gender equality opportunities, the reduction of the gender gap in higher education and the introduction of the gender perspective. It has been maintaining dialogue with associations and groups such as AMIT-Aragón (Association of Women Researchers and Technologists of Aragon), EUFEM (University Platform for Feminist and Gender Studies) or the Chair on Equality and Gender at the University of Zaragoza. From the specific point of view of the introduction of the gender perspective, it has exchanged methodologies and information on diagnostic elements and evaluation indicators with Spanish agencies especially committed to equality issues, such as AQU Catalunya and Unibasq. Since 2018 it has included in its activity reports a report on gender parity and equality in the composition of committees and panels of the Agency. In 2019 the evaluation perspective of this commitment to equality was strengthened thanks to the [ALCAEUS](#) program for the certification of centers according to Agenda 2030. In 2020, the aim is to give a considerable boost to this commitment to equality, which is already required by national and regional legislation. This will be done in the following way.

- Taking into account the emerging methodologies in the EHEA, a framework document will be developed to provide guidelines and indicators on the gender perspective for their subsequent introduction into evaluation protocols, both for degrees and for research activity.
- The design of a basic table of indicators that will make it possible to promote and make visible the commitment of the centers that make up the University System of Aragon to respect sexual diversity and the recognition and protection of the gender identity that each person feels.

This activity should be considered as a constitutive part of the EHEA Fundamental Value of public responsibility of higher education. It remains unclear whether it is fully implemented in other countries in which ACPUA operates beyond Spain, like France.

CTI understands its role as crucial for the promotion of Fundamental Values, and believes its promotion of these was an incentive for certain private HEIs to work on their widening access programs and promotion of gender inclusiveness.

Unibasq underlines that to the extent that these core values are embedded in either the normative or policy frameworks in which HEIs and QA agencies operate, they can play an important role.

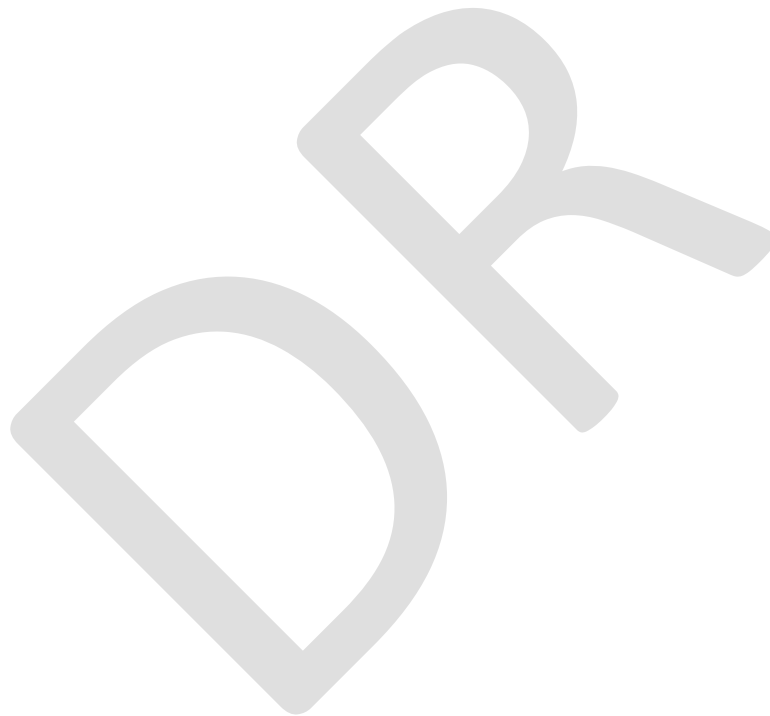
### 2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

ACPUA believes “agencies can act as catalysts of the Fundamental Values for our HEI systems” but the challenge remains the development of good indicators and, in its view, additional efforts for building the case for all stakeholders.

CTI believes that promotion of Fundamental Values within QA procedures further encourages a spill over effect to the educational processes themselves, in helping educate engineers as active citizens.



Unibasq sees as an opportunity the existing favourable political and social context, in which the promotion of Fundamental Values such as accountability, equitable access and social responsibility have great prestige. Different actors are establishing policies and frameworks for action in this regard, giving as an example the 2030 agenda and the SDGs of the United Nations. Regarding limitations, Unibasq refers to the resource constraints of QA agencies, the need for them to focus their efforts on improving the core processes of HEIs. Another important limitation or risk is, in Unibasq's opinion, associated with the "fashion effect" of some of the approaches to the promotion of core values and social responsibility of universities. Unibasq stresses that QA processes have always promoted Fundamental Values and social responsibility. We understand that QAs can play an important role but are aware of their limitations in terms of available resources and methodologies of action and operations.



## GEORGIA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Act 688 on Higher Education of 21 December 2004, SSM, 2.
- Act 3531 on Education Quality Improvement of July 21, 2010, LHG, 47.
- Order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia №65/n of May 4, 2011, On Approval of the Statute and Fees for the Accreditation of Educational Programmes of the General Education Institutions and Higher Education Institutions.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

The legislative framework prescribes student participation in QA procedures and, besides calling upon ESG and international standards, no direct references to Fundamental Values are made.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Accreditation; NCEQE – National Center for Quality Enhancement.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. NCEQE calls upon international standards and the ESG, yet no direct reference to Fundamental Values is made.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

Some latest amendments to the legal framework were made in 2018, yet they did not concern the introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA procedures.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of authorized institutions can be found here:

<https://www.mes.gov.ge/content.php?id=1855&lang=eng>

#### 2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation

No agencies operating in Georgia responded to our survey.

#### 2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices

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#### 2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices

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## GERMANY

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:<sup>53</sup>

- Framework Act for Higher Education (Hochschulrahmengesetz – R122) of 1998.
- Interstate Treaty on the organization of a joint accreditation system for Quality Assurance in teaching and learning at German Higher Education Institutions (Interstate Study Accreditation Treaty) of December 2004.
- Interstate Treaty on the organization of a joint accreditation system to ensure the quality of teaching and learning at German higher education institutions (Interstate study accreditation treaty) (Decision of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany of 08/12/2016), Enacted on January 1, 2018.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

Besides calling upon the ESG, there are no direct references to the Fundamental Values.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AAQ – Swiss Agency for Accreditation and Quality Assurance; ACQUIN – Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute; AHPGS – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences; AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; CTI – Engineering Degree Commission; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; evalag – Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement; NVAO – Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders; Unibasq – Agency for Quality of the Basque University System; ZEvA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AAQ directly refers to institutional autonomy with public responsibility of higher education (through accountability), as well as participation of students and staff in QA procedures. ACQUIN refers to the necessity of the higher education institution to be embedded in its scientific and social environment, thus recalling the value of public responsibility of higher education; participation of students and staff in higher education governance; and regulations of the HEI that provide for conflict resolutions that preserve academic freedom. AHPGS in its handbook for program accreditation directly states that QA policies at HEI should support academic integrity and freedom. AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its

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<sup>53</sup> Besides the Framework Act, in Germany there are 16 state (Länder) laws which have not been the object of our analysis.

specific criteria and guidelines. Evalag includes Fundamental Values of the EHEA in its assessment criteria, most notably institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and participation of students and staff in Higher Education governance. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. MusiQue standards outline public interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures. NVAO underlines institutional autonomy and public responsibility of higher education, further establishing the participation of staff and students in QA procedures. Unibasq refers to the ESG and international standards. ZEvA refers to autonomy and responsibility and, in the description of its mission, it reasserts “central ideas and principles...still shared by all” including academic freedom and autonomy.

#### *1.4 National reforms on QA*

Since 2018, significant changes have taken place in the QA procedures in Germany, adopted by the Treaty and common regulatory framework of the Länder which demands to be implemented consistently in all the German federal states. The German Accreditation Council takes the final decision about an accreditation based on the report of an EQAR registered and certified in Germany agency and the statement of the university.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions and study programs can be found here:

<https://antrag.akkreditierungsrat.de/>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research and participation of staff and students in governance, while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It makes note of the rising contradictions in EHEA value requirements and legislative frameworks of specific EHEA countries, and the link with the private HEIs.

CTI plans to strengthen its criteria and guidelines from 2022 with a stronger emphasis on environmental and social issues, which could be regarded as the Fundamental Value of public responsibility of higher education, including criteria such as: to build an inclusive and sustainable society; equality of all persons, regardless of gender, social background, disability; promotion and positive actions to guarantee access to HE and smooth integration for persons from different backgrounds, gender and special needs; ethics and deontology at school and in the profession; social responsibility of the engineer and taking into account the environmental impact of engineering and ecology. It is unclear whether these criteria will be equally implemented in countries outside of France where CTI operates.

Unibasq notes how the regulatory framework in Spain, where the agency is based, identifies issues related to social responsibility of universities, and in particular the objectives of the 2030 agenda. Yet, the objectives lack clear operationalization. Also, Unibasq evaluation procedures do not develop further Fundamental Values.

ZEvA has stated that Fundamental Values are “not a question for QA but governmental oversight”.

Other agencies operating in Germany did not respond to our survey.

### 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

CTI understands its role as crucial for the promotion of Fundamental Values, and believes its promotion of these was an incentive for certain private HEIs to work on their widening access programs and promotion of gender inclusiveness.

Unibasq underlines that to the extent that these core values are embedded in either the normative or policy frameworks in which HEIs and QA agencies operate, they can play an important role.

### 2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.

CTI believes that promotion of Fundamental Values within QA procedures further encourages a spill over effect to the educational processes themselves, in helping educate engineers as active citizens.

Unibasq sees as an opportunity the existing favourable political and social context, in which the promotion of Fundamental Values such as accountability, equitable access and social responsibility have great prestige. Different actors are establishing policies and frameworks for action in this regard, giving as an example the 2030 agenda and the SDGs of the United Nations. Regarding limitations, Unibasq refers to the resource constraints of QA agencies, the need for them to focus their efforts on improving the core processes of HEIs. Another important limitation or risk is, in Unibasq's opinion, associated with the fashion effect of some of the approaches to the promotion of core values and social responsibility of universities. Unibasq stresses that QA processes have always promoted Fundamental Values and social responsibility. It understands that QAs can play an important role but is aware of their limitations in terms of available resources and methodologies of action and operations.

## GREECE

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Law 4777/2021 on Introduction to Higher Education, protection of academic freedom, upgrading of the academic environment and other provisions (Official Gazette A 25 – 17.02.2021).
- Law 4653/2020 on National Higher Education Authority. Special Accounts for Research Funds of Higher Education Institutions, Research and Technological Bodies and other provisions (Official Gazette A 12 /24.01.2020).

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

All the legal provisions were inaccessible for legal analysis due to lack of translation into the English language.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

BAC – British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Medicine; QAA – Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

BAC makes no direct reference to the Fundamental Values. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. QAA only refers to student participation in QA procedures.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

A new law on HE was adopted in 2021 but, due to language inaccessibility, it is unclear whether there are direct references to the relationship between Fundamental Values and QA.

## 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

Higher Education Institutions list and framework can be found here:

[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/types-higher-education-institutions-33\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/types-higher-education-institutions-33_en)

#### 2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation

QAA, as well as firmly embedding its principles in the UK regulatory frameworks supporting institutional autonomy, student and staff participation in QA procedures and governance, also in its latest QAA Strategy document refers to academic integrity and student engagement. It is unclear how many of the same principles are being implemented in Greece, as well as in the UK.

Other agencies operating in Greece did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

QAA seeks to “encourage enhancement of quality, beyond baseline regulatory requirements”, firmly involving all stakeholders, including students and staff, and encouraging HEIs to implement the same principles in their internal processes. It is also active in promotion of academic integrity and the prevention of cheating and fraud.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

QAA sees an opportunity for furthering student and staff participation in the transition to a digital environment as a consequence of Covid-19 pandemic, yet this brings up more threats to academic integrity, as essay mills and cheaters look to exploit new technologies and processes. It also makes note that if national governmental priorities do not align with the Fundamental Values, this could be a barrier for including them in QA practices.





## HOLY SEE

The Holy See has not been included in the study, due to the specific nature of its Higher Education organization and the fact that no EQAR registered external QA agencies conduct quality assurance of the Ecclesiastical Institutions of Higher Education.

The Holy See's Agency for the Evaluation and Promotion of Quality in Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties (AVEPRO), established by the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI on 19 September 2007, is an institution connected to the Holy See, as provided by arts. 186 and 190–191 of the Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus*. The Agency's duty is to promote and develop a culture of quality within the academic institutions that depend directly on the Holy See and ensure they possess internationally valid quality criteria.

AVEPRO's activities are regulated by the Apostolic Constitution *Sapientia christiana* (15 April 1979) and it conforms to the European Standards and Guidelines, as well as other international agreements concerning rules and procedures for the evaluation of quality in higher education.



## HUNGARY

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- 2011. évi CCIV. törvény – a nemzeti felsőoktatásról [Act CCIV/2011 on National Higher Education].
- 2017. évi XXV. Törvény – a nemzeti felsőoktatásról szóló 2011. évi CCIV. törvény módosításáról [Act XXV of 2017 to amend Act CCIV/2011 on National Higher Education].
- 2014. évi LXXVI. törvény a tudományos kutatásról, fejlesztésről és innovációról [Act LXXVI of 2014 on Scientific Research, Development and Innovation].
- 2018. évi CIV. Törvény egyes kutatás-fejlesztéssel, valamint szakképzéssel összefüggő törvények módosításáról [Act CIV of 2018 to amend certain Acts related to research and development and continuous vocational training].
- 24/2013. (II.5.) Korm. Rendelet a nemzeti felsőoktatási kiválóságról [Government Decree 24/2013. (II.5.) on the Excellence in Higher Education].
- 19/2012. (II. 22.) Korm. Rendelet a felsőoktatási minőségértékelés és -fejlesztés egyes kérdéseiről [Government Decree 19/2012 (II. 22.) on Quality Assurance and Quality Development in Higher Education].
- 230/2012. (VIII. 28.) Korm. rendelet a felsőoktatási szakképzésről és a felsőoktatási képzéshez kapcsolódó szakmai gyakorlat egyes kérdéseiről [Government Regulation 230/2012 (VIII. 28.) on certain aspects of higher education, and vocational training within the framework of higher education].

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

Besides compliance with the ESG, there are no direct references to the Fundamental Values.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AHPGS – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; BAC – British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Medicine; evalag – Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; HAC – Hungarian Accreditation Committee; IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AHPGS in its handbook for program accreditation directly states that QA policies at HEI should support academic integrity and freedom. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. BAC makes no direct reference to the Fundamental Values. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. EQ-Arts besides general

references to the ESG and participation of students and staff in QA procedures does not outline direct references to the Fundamental Values. Evalag includes Fundamental Values of the EHEA in its assessment criteria, most notably institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and participation of students and staff in Higher Education governance. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. HAC, besides calling upon the ESG, in its declaration of the deed of foundation proclaims: “In the spirit of Article 10 of the Fundamental Law of Hungary, the Hungarian Accreditation Committee upholds the freedom of scientific research, artistic creation, learning and teaching, the scientific and artistic freedom of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Hungarian Academy of Arts”. IEP directly refers to the ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom, and student and staff participation in governance.

#### *1.4 National reforms on QA*

Several developments have taken place in Hungary during the last years regarding the Higher Education system, yet none directly influenced QA procedures in relation to the Fundamental Values. Certainly, changes in the HE law in 2017 led to the eviction of the Central European University, placing a number of demands on the foreign HEIs operating in Hungary, which subsequently targeted only CEU.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found in Annex 1 to Act CCIV of 2011:

[https://www.mab.hu/wp-content/uploads/Nftv\\_angol\\_2Sept2016\\_EMMI-forditas.pdf](https://www.mab.hu/wp-content/uploads/Nftv_angol_2Sept2016_EMMI-forditas.pdf)

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research and participation of staff and students in governance, while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It makes note of the rising contradictions in the EHEA value requirements and legislative frameworks of specific EHEA countries, and the link with the private HEIs.

HAC states that its internal regulations include “university freedom and academic integrity”, while the role of the agency itself remains within the ESG framework.

Other agencies operating in Hungary did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

HAC states that it has no special focus on Fundamental Values.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.

HAC sees in the ESG an opportunity to raise awareness of the Fundamental Values, although it underlines that its powers are limited in the sense that it “cannot tell the institutions how they should work”.

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## ICELAND

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Higher Education Act No. 63 of 13 June 2006, amended by Act No 126/2011 (entry into force 30 September 2011), Act No. 67/2012 (entry into force 3 July 2012), and Act No. 91/2015.
- Act on Public Higher Education Institutions No. 85/2008 of 12 June 2008, amended by Act No. 50/2010, Act No. 126/2011, Act No. 171/2011, Act No. 56/2013 and Act No. 140/2013.
- Regulation on Quality Assurance of Teaching and Research No. 321 of 25 February 2009.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No direct references to Fundamental Values in relation to the QA were identified, except for participation of students and staff in QA procedures.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

MusiQue standards outline public interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

No significant developments were identified regarding QA.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://study.iceland.is/>

#### 2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation

No agencies operating in Iceland have responded to our survey.

#### 2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices

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#### 2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices

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## IRELAND

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Higher Education Authority Act 1971, Act No. 22/1971 (Ir.).
- Irish Universities Act 1997, Act No. 24/1997 (Ir.).
- Institute of Technology Act 2006, Act No. 25/2006 (Ir.).
- Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019, Act No. 32/2019.
- Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, Act No. 28/2012.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No direct references to Fundamental Values were identified.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; BAC – British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Medicine; IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme; QAA – Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education; QQI – Quality and Qualifications Ireland; Unibasq – Agency for Quality of the Basque University System.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. BAC makes no direct reference to the Fundamental Values. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to their specific criteria and guidelines. IEP directly refers to the ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom and student and staff participation in governance. QAA only refers to student participation in QA procedures. QQI in its guidelines refers most explicitly to Fundamental Values such as public responsibility of higher education, participation of students and staff in QA procedures and governance, academic integrity, and teaching and learning that encourages critical thinking. Unibasq refers to the ESG and international standards.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act was amended in 2018/2019 which provided additional powers to QQI in regulation of academic integrity and essay mills. All 22 publicly regulated higher education institutions will be evaluated over the period 2018–2023 by QQI.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

### 2.1 *Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of NQF referenced programs can be found here:

<https://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/Search?searchtype=providers>

### 2.2 *QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

QAA, as well as firmly embedding its principles in the UK regulatory frameworks supporting institutional autonomy, student and staff participation in QA procedures and governance, also in its latest QAA Strategy document refers to academic integrity and student engagement. It is unclear how much of the same principles are being implemented in Ireland, as well as in the UK.

QQI focuses on academic integrity and essay mills, by powers gained by the amendments of the regulatory framework in 2019.

Unibasq notes how the regulatory framework in Spain, where the agency is based, identifies issues related to social responsibility of universities, and in particular the objectives of the 2030 agenda. Yet, the objectives lack clear operationalization. Also, Unibasq evaluation procedures do not develop further Fundamental Values.

Other agencies operating in Ireland did not respond to our survey.

### 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

QAA seeks to “encourage enhancement of quality, beyond baseline regulatory requirements”, firmly involving all stakeholders, including students and staff, and encouraging HEIs to implement same principles in their internal processes. It is also active in promotion of academic integrity and prevention of cheating and fraud.

QQI did not specify any particular role beyond accreditation and evaluation practices.

Unibasq underlines that to the extent that these core values are embedded in either the normative or policy frameworks in which HEIs and QA agencies operate, they can play an important role.

### 2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

QAA sees an opportunity for furthering student and staff participation in the transition to a digital environment as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, yet this brings up more threats to academic integrity, as essay mills and cheaters look to exploit new technologies and processes. It also notes that if national governmental priorities do not align with the Fundamental Values, this could be a barrier for including them in QA practices.

QQI believes operationalization of Fundamental Values could enhance transparency and public confidence while safeguarding integrity of teaching, learning and assessment processes, as well as enhanced protection for learners. Limitations, in its view, lie in the possible danger of overburdening QA procedures, which it might be possible to avoid if the implementation is conducted in strong collaboration with the agencies.

Unibasq sees as an opportunity the existing favourable political and social context, in which the promotion of Fundamental Values such as accountability, equitable access and social responsibility have great prestige. Different actors are establishing policies and frameworks for action in this regard, giving as an example the 2030 agenda and the SDGs of the United Nations. Regarding limitations, Unibasq refers to the resource constraints of QA agencies, the need for them to focus their efforts on improving the core processes of HEIs. Another important limitation

or risk is, in Unibasq's opinion, associated with the fashion effect of some of the approaches to the promotion of core values and social responsibility of universities. Unibasq stresses that QA processes have always promoted Fundamental Values and social responsibility. It understands that QAAs can play an important role but is aware of their limitations in terms of available resources and methodologies of action and operations.

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## ITALY

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Legge 30 Dicembre 2010, n. 240, G.U. Gen. 14, 2011, n. 10. (Norme in materia di organizzazione delle universita', di personale accademico e reclutamento, nonche' delega al Governo per incentivare la qualità e l'efficienza del sistema universitario). [Law December 30, 2010, No. 240, G.U. Gen. 14, 2011, No. 10 (Regulations regarding organization of universities, academic staff and recruitment, as well as delegation to the Government for incentivizing quality and efficiency of the university system)].

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No references to Fundamental Values were identified.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme; NVAO – Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. IEP directly refers to the ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom and student and staff participation in governance. NVAO underlines institutional autonomy and public responsibility of higher education, further establishing the participation of staff and students in QA procedures.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

No key developments in the field of QA were identified.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

[https://cercauniversita.cineca.it/index.php?module=strutture&page=StructureSearchParams&advanced\\_serch=1](https://cercauniversita.cineca.it/index.php?module=strutture&page=StructureSearchParams&advanced_serch=1)

#### 2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research and participation of staff and students in governance, while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It makes note of the contradictory EHEA value requirements and legislative frameworks of specific EHEA countries, and the link with the private HEIs.

Other agencies operating in Italy did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.



## KAZAKHSTAN

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Law No. 319-III of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Education” as of July 27, 2007.
- Law No. 407-IV of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Science” as of February 18, 2011.
- Law No. 171-VI of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On amendments and additions to some legislative acts on the Expansion of academic and managerial independence of higher educational institutions” as of July 4, 2018.
- Law No. 172-VI of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On amendments and additions to some legislative acts of the Republic Kazakhstan on education” of July 4, 2018.
- Order of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan of June 8, 2011 No. 645 “About approval of rules of accreditation of subjects of scientific and (or) scientific and technical activities” (as amended on December 30, 2020).
- State program No. 988 of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On the Development of Education and Science” of December 27, 2019.
- On approval of the Standard Rules for the activities of educational organizations of the respective types, Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan of October 30, 2018 No. 595.

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No direct references to Fundamental Values were identified except for reference to the obligation to respect the ESG.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

ACQUIN – Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute; ACSUG – Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University System; AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; IAAR – Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating; IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme; IQAA – Independent Agency for Quality Assurance in Education; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies’ regulatory frameworks

ACQUIN refers to the necessity of the higher education institution to be embedded in its scientific and social environment, thus recalling the value of public responsibility of higher education; participation of students and staff in higher education governance; and regulations of the HEI that provide for conflict resolutions that preserve academic freedom. ACSUG does not have any direct references to Fundamental Values. AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European

Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. IAAR standards rely exclusively on the ESG. IQAA in its standards requires participation of staff in QA procedures, policies supporting academic integrity, participation of students and staff in governance, and responsibility of higher education. MusiQue standards outline Public Interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures.

#### *1.4 National reforms on QA*

Some changes in the HE legislative framework have been made in recent years, introducing respect of the ESG, accompanying institutional autonomy with accountability mechanisms, and transition from quality control to the QA system. The Committee for Control in the field of Education and Science of the Ministry of Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan was transformed into the Committee for Quality Assurance in Education and Science of the Ministry of Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited educational organizations can be found here:

<https://enic-kazakhstan.edu.kz/en/accreditation/organizacii-vysshego-i-ili-poslevuzovskogo-obrazovaniya-1>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research and participation of staff and students in governance, while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It notes that EHEA value requirements increasingly contradict legislative frameworks. It also raises the issue of the link between Fundamental Values and the private HEIs.

IAAR, based in Kazakhstan, focuses on the ESG implementation in its QA procedures.

IQAA underlines the importance of values of Institutional Autonomy and Academic Integrity.

Other agencies operating in Kazakhstan did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

IAAR did not specify any further role.

IQAA underlines promoting excellence, yet not in particular related to Fundamental Values. In 2017 the League of Academic Integrity, a voluntary association of HEIs, was created by more than 20 HEIs in Kazakhstan. It aims to promote principles of Academic Integrity, ensuring universities' mandatory verification of all students' written work for plagiarism. IQAA underlines that it encourages HEI to "transition to an honest and quality academic culture through the standards developed by our agency [and] in this way help them become more student-oriented, innovative, and excellent."

#### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.

IAAR stated that in its view, effective implementation of Fundamental Values identified in the 2020 Rome Communiqué of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) requires foremost the "authorized bodies [Ministries of Education]...in order to improve deeper understanding and increase commitment of the governments to the Fundamental Values".

IQAA underlines possible challenges in terms of lack of resources and institutional and legislative pitfalls, but widely related to the HE reforms processes rather than the relationship between QA and Fundamental Values.



## 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

#### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Augstskolu likums 1995, Latvijas Vēstnesis, 179 [Law on Institutions of Higher Education of 1995, Official Gazette, 179].
- Ministru kabineta noteikumi Nr. 618 Rīgā 2020. gada 6. oktobrī (prot. Nr. 59 4. §), Izglītības iestāžu, eksaminācijas centru, citu Izglītības likumā noteiktu institūciju un izglītības programmu akreditācijas un izglītības iestāžu vadītāju profesionālās darbības novērtēšanas kārtība, Latvijas Vēstnesis, 195, 08.10.2020. [Minister Cabinet Regulation No. 618 of October 6, 2020, Procedure of Accreditation of Education Institutions, Examination Centers and Other Institutions Defined by the Education Law, General and Vocational Education Programmes, and Evaluation of Professional Activity of Heads of State Higher Education, Upper-secondary Education, State and Municipal Education Institutions, Official Gazette, 195, 18.10.2020.]
- Ministru kabineta noteikumi Nr. 794 Rīgā 2018. gada 11. decembrī (prot. Nr. 59 58. §), Augstskolu un koledžu akreditācijas noteikumi, Latvijas Vēstnesis, 251, 21.12.2018. [Cabinet Regulation No. 794 of December 11, 2018, Regulations Regarding Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Colleges, Official Gazette, 251, 21.12.2018].
- Ministru kabineta noteikumi Nr. 793 Rīgā 2018. gada 11. decembrī (prot. Nr. 59 57. §), Studiju virzienu atvēršanas un akreditācijas noteikumi, Latvijas Vēstnesis, 252, 27.12.2018. [Cabinet Regulation No. 793 of December 11, 2018, Regulations Regarding Opening and Accreditation of Study Fields, Official Gazette, 252, 27.12.2018].
- Ministru kabineta noteikumi Nr. 795 Rīgā 2018. gada 11. decembrī (prot. Nr. 59 59. §), Studiju programmu licencēšanas noteikumi, Latvijas Vēstnesis, 252, 27.12.2018. [Cabinet Regulation No. 795 of December 11, 2018, Regulations Regarding Licensing of Study Programmes, Official Gazette, 252, 27.12.2018].

#### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No direct references to Fundamental Values were identified.

### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AIC – Academic Information Centre; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme.

### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AIC refers directly to the ESG, ENQA standards and guidelines, and students' participation in governance, but also demands that the constitution and by-laws of HEIs reference the Fundamental Values and core activities, without actually specifying them. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. IEP directly refers to the ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom and student and staff participation in governance.

## 1.4 *National reforms on QA*

Several changes have been taking place in the last years, notably the amendment and adoption of Cabinet Regulations regarding accreditation and licensing, yet none of these changes has introduced direct references to the Fundamental Values. As of August 16, 2021, the amendments came into force and foresee the establishment of the council as the highest decision-making authority in each higher education institution. The process of establishing the councils is still ongoing, but there is continuing debate about the impact of these councils on the autonomy of the higher education institutions as a number of council members will be selected by the President of the Republic and the responsible ministry (in most cases the Ministry of Education and Science).

## 2 **Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### 2.1 *Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

Information on accredited institutions and study programs can be found here:

<http://www.aic.lv/portal/en/izglitiba-latvija/izglitibas-iestades>

### 2.2 *QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

AIC has included Fundamental Values in its assessment methodologies, notably academic integrity, participation of staff and students in governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education.

### 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AIC sees its main role as to promote the implementation of Fundamental Values in HEIs through quality assessment procedures (with methodologies including explicit references to academic integrity, involvement of staff and students in governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education) and the support activities that it provides: seminars, dissemination of case-studies and examples of good practice.

### 2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

While most of the Fundamental Values require an institutional approach, AIC notes that most of its assessments take place on the study program (and groups) level, where, in its view, most of the infringements take place, and thus it has limited mechanisms for advocacy. AIC identifies that the main limitations are in the focus of QA procedures, and encourages the operationalization of Fundamental Values in QA procedures at the institutional level.

## LIECHTENSTEIN

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Law on higher education (Hochschulgesetz; HSG) of 25/11/2004, LGBl: 2005.002.
- Ordinance on Higher Education (Hochschulverordnung; HSV) of 16/08/2011, LGBl: 2011.337.
- Law on the University of Liechtenstein of 25/11/2004 (Gesetz vom 25. November 2004 über die Universität Liechtenstein (LUG)) LGBl: 2005.003.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No data.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AAQ – Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Insurance; ACQUIN – Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; evalag – Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AAQ directly refers to institutional autonomy with public responsibility of higher education (through accountability), as well as participation of students and staff in QA procedures. ACQUIN refers to the necessity of the higher education institution to be embedded in its scientific and social environment, thus recalling the value of public responsibility of higher education; participation of students and staff in higher education governance; and regulations of the HEI that provide for conflict resolutions that preserve academic freedom. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. Evalag includes Fundamental Values of the EHEA in its assessment criteria, most notably institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and participation of students and staff in Higher Education governance.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

No significant changes were identified.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.llv.li/inhalt/1707/amtsstellen/hochschulwesen>

#### 2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation



AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research and participation of staff and students in governance, while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It notes that EHEA value requirements increasingly contradict legislative frameworks. It also raises the issue of the link between Fundamental Values and the private HEIs.

Other agencies operating in Liechtenstein did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.



## LITHUANIA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Order No. V-32 of the Director of the Center for Quality Assessment in Higher Education on the Approval of the Methodology for Conducting Institutional Review of a Higher Education Institution, March 9, 2020.
- Order No. V-1529 of The Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania on the Approval of the Procedure for the External Review and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Branches of Foreign Higher Education Institutions, Evaluation Areas and Indicators, December 19, 2019.
- I-1489 Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo įstatymas [The Law No. I-1498 on Education of the Republic of Lithuania], Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, 2011.
- XI-242 Lietuvos Respublikos mokslo ir studijų įstatymas [The Law XI-242 on Higher Education and Research], Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, 2009.
- Order No. V-1168 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania on Approval of Description of General Requirements for the Provision of Studies, December 30, 2016.
- Dėl Studijų programų išorinio vertinimo ir akreditavimo tvarkos aprašo [Description No V-1487 of the Procedure of the External Assessment and Accreditation of Study Programmes], Minister for Education and Science, July 29, 2011.
- Dėl Nacionalinės studijų programos patvirtinimo [National Programme of Studies], Minister for Education and Science, No ISAK-2334, December 3, 2007.
- Dėl Aukštosios mokyklos veiklos vertinimo metodikos patvirtinimo [The Methodology for Self-Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions], Director of Center for Quality Assessment in Higher Education, No 1-01-135, October 25, 2010.
- Dėl Studijų programų išorinio vertinimo ir akreditavimo tvarkos aprašo patvirtinimo [The Procedure for the External Evaluation and Accreditation of Study Programmes], Minister for Education and Science, No ISAK-1487, July 27, 2011.

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

The legislative framework refers to the public responsibility of higher education and participation of students and staff in governance, freedom of creation and research, academic freedom and autonomy, academic ethics, public responsibility of higher education through “integration into the sustainable development of the state and society”. A higher education institution must ensure the academic freedom of the members of the academic community. Fundamental Values, per SKVC claims, are put into the Law on Higher Education and Research, then reflected in the lower-level legislation (especially as concerns implementation of student-centered learning – on the level of the Ministry; then translated into external QA methodologies). Direct references on the QA procedures note the obligation of compliance with the ESG.

### 1.2 *A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country*

ACQUIN – Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute; AHPGS – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; evalag – Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg; FIBAA – Foundation for Business Administration Accreditation; IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme; PKA – Polish Accreditation Committee; SKVC – Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education.

### 1.3 *Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks*

ACQUIN refers to the necessity of the higher education institution to be embedded in its scientific and social environment, thus recalling the value of public responsibility of higher education; participation of students and staff in higher education governance; and regulations of the HEI that provide for conflict resolutions that preserve academic freedom. AHPGS in its handbook for program accreditation directly states that QA policies at HEI should support academic integrity and freedom. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. Evalag includes Fundamental Values of the EHEA in its assessment criteria, most notably institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and participation of students and staff in Higher Education governance. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. IEP directly refers to the ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom and student and staff participation in governance. PKA refers to public responsibility of higher education. SKVC refers directly to the ESG and public responsibility of higher education in its internal documents, yet does not made any other direct references to the Fundamental Values.

### 1.4 *National reforms on QA*

Methodologies and procedures of external QA have been updated in recent years, without significant changes regarding the Fundamental Values.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### 2.1 *Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.aikos.smm.lt/Puslapiai/Pradinis.aspx>

### 2.2 *QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research and participation of staff and students in governance, while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It notes that EHEA value requirements increasingly contradict legislative frameworks. It also raises the issue of the link between Fundamental Values and the private HEIs.

SKVC, when carrying out procedures in Lithuania, is obliged to assure that HEIs fulfil the expectations of the Lithuanian Law on HE; but when operating abroad, the organization notes that it may or may not check requirements of those other countries – this would depend upon the context and the purpose of the review. SKVC underlines that this is a significant difference and needs to be properly understood – national agencies working locally have national obligations,

while reviews abroad can be purely developmental, enhancement-oriented, with no consideration of larger issues pertaining to the system level. SKVC also notes that each specific procedure and the instruments for various QA processes that agencies undertake would require separate analysis in regard to operationalization of Fundamental Values.

Other agencies operating in Lithuania did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

SKVC reminds us “that as a rule, QA agencies have not just one external QA instrument, but several, and their purposes are different (e.g., evaluation/review/audit of HEIs, programs, clusters of study programs etc.; monitoring of HEI activities; cross-sector thematic evaluations etc.); then there may be other types of activities, such as training events, round-table discussions, conferences; contribution to drafting national legislation etc.”.

SKVC takes up, as a good practice, the example of its principles of triangulation (sources for decision making include institutional SERs, evidence from interviews during the panel visit, and expert own opinion) and exhaustiveness, meaning other pieces of official information. More specifically, in order to capture all aspects of academic ethics and integrity, it asks for information from the Academic Ethics Ombudsperson Institution on cases pertaining to the HEI under review. This cooperation ensures there is no duplication of evaluation, but also gives an accurate presentation of the situation with difficult cases which may or may not had been properly reflected in the institutional self-evaluation report (SER). Also, in this procedure, experts take into consideration not only SER, but other information provided by SKVC (e.g., results of investigation into student complaints submitted; results of special audits done on the institution by the Ministry in case there was a need to investigate situations relating to possible violation of the Law on HE&R and other legislation etc.).

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies’ experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.

SKVC states that there are no threats to Fundamental Values in Lithuania, such as academic freedom, institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and thus it does not need to play a special role in this respect. It sees an opportunity in cooperation with the Academic Ethics Ombudsperson Institution to promote academic ethics and integrity. Further SKVC notes that “as to public responsibility for and of higher education, [the] biggest challenges are around sustainable financing of higher education and research, as during the last years EU structural support was significant and without it the public budget would had not been able to contribute the same funds; also we need to redefine the scope and funding of external QA activities – again for the reason that many of these activities were implemented with the support of European Social Fund”.

Further on, SKVC underlines that usually national QA agencies are not free to define the framework in which they operate – they can define their own methodologies respecting the overall legal framework. So, there are limits to what they can do: they can implement policies, not define them; at best – they participate in co-design of the policies. SKVC’s view is that

“Fundamental Values may be taken for granted as being safeguarded in mature and well-functioning higher education systems, where democracy and the rule of law is respected, gender equality and ecological thinking promoted, etc. But if something goes wrong, and, following the democratic elections non democratic leaders are elected to the Parliament and correspondingly, doubtful appointments made at the levels of the Government and the Ministry, the quality assurance agency due to legal hierarchies may also be subject to limitations imposed from the top and may not be in a position to defend and promote the Fundamental Values.”

SKVC’s proposal is that Fundamental Values should be better reflected in the ESG, as clear standards and not just guidelines. Another proposal would be to take up Fundamental Values as key elements of external evaluations of QA agencies, even if these cannot always be held accountable as they must conform to the national regulatory frameworks; but the monitoring of Bologna Process implementation could further strengthen the case for Fundamental Values among governments as well.



## LUXEMBOURG

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Loi du 27 juin 2018 ayant pour objet l'organisation de l'Université du Luxembourg, Journal Officiel No. 587 du 11 juillet 2018 [Law on the Organization of the University of Luxembourg of June 27, 2018].
- Loi du 19 juin 2009 portant organisation de l'enseignement supérieur, Recueil de législation A-N.153 du 1 juillet 2009 [Law on the Organization of the Higher Education of June 19, 2009].

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No direct references to the Fundamental Values were identified.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AAQ – Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; CTI – Engineering Degree Commission; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; HCERES – High Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education; IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme; NVAO – Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders; QQI – Quality and Qualifications Ireland.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AAQ directly refers to institutional autonomy with public responsibility of higher education (through accountability), as well as participation of students and staff in QA procedures. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. CTI underlines institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in QA procedures and in governance, and responsibility of higher education. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. HCERES strongly underlines the importance of research integrity. It also understands the institutional positioning of the HEI as related to the value of public responsibility of higher education. Referring to institutional strategy, HCERES underlines institutional autonomy and responsibility, in social matters and sustainable development. Discussing institutional governance, HCERES asserts the importance of university democracy and participation of staff and students in QA procedures. Regarding research policies, HCERES underlines academic integrity and, further discussing students, asserts student participation in governance. IEP directly refers to the ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom and student and staff participation in governance. NVAO underlines institutional autonomy and public responsibility of higher education, further establishing the participation of staff and students in QA procedures. QQI in its guidelines refers most explicitly to Fundamental Values such as public responsibility of higher education, participation of students and staff in QA procedures and governance, academic integrity, and teaching and learning that encourages critical thinking.

#### 1.4 *National reforms on QA*

No significant changes were identified.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### 2.1 *Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://luxembourg.public.lu/en/work-and-study/studying-in-luxembourg/universities.html>

### 2.2 *QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research and participation of staff and students in governance, while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It notes that EHEA value requirements increasingly contradict legislative frameworks. It also raises the issue of the link between Fundamental Values and the private HEIs.

CTI plans to strengthen its criteria and guidelines from 2022 with a stronger emphasis on environmental and social issues, which could be regarded as the Fundamental Value of public responsibility of higher education, including criteria such as: to build an inclusive and sustainable society; equality of all persons, regardless of gender, social background, disability; promotion and positive actions to guarantee access to HE and smooth integration for persons from different backgrounds, gender and special needs; ethics and deontology at school and in the profession; social responsibility of the engineer and taking into account the environmental impact of engineering and ecology. It is unclear whether these criteria will be equally implemented in countries outside of France where CTI operates.

QQI focuses on academic integrity and essay mills, by powers gained by the amendments of the regulatory framework in 2019, but it is unclear if this focus remains outside of Ireland.

No other agencies operating in Luxembourg responded to our survey.

### 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

CTI understands its role as crucial for the promotion of Fundamental Values, and believes its promotion of these was an incentive for certain private HEIs to work on their widening access programs and promotion of gender inclusiveness.

QQI did not specify any particular role beyond accreditation and evaluation practices.

### 2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.

CTI believes that promotion of Fundamental Values within QA procedures further encourages a spill over effect to the educational processes themselves, in helping educate engineers as active citizens.

QQI believes operationalization of Fundamental Values could enhance transparency and public confidence while safeguarding integrity of teaching, learning and assessment processes, as well as enhanced protection for learners. Limitations, in its view, lie in a possible danger of overburdening QA procedures, which it might be possible to avoid if the implementation is conducted in strong collaboration with the agencies.

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## MALTA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Act No. II of 2020 – Further and Higher Education Act, 2020 Government Gazette of Malta No. 20,351 – 21.02.2020.
- Act No. XIII of 2012 – Education (Amendment) Act, 2012 Government Gazette of Malta No. 18,942 – 13.07.2012.
- Chapter 607 Further and Higher Education Act of 2021 (An Act to establish the Malta Authority for Further and Higher Education which Authority shall regulate further and higher educational institutions and education providers), *partially in force*.
- S.L.607.03 Further and Higher Education (Licensing, Accreditation and Quality Assurance) Regulations of September 24, 2012.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

The legislative framework refers to the ESG, and general international and European standards, without specifying them.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; Unibasq – Agency for Quality of the Basque University System.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. Unibasq refers to the ESG and international standards.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

A number of legislative acts have been amended and adopted in the last couple of years, but it is unclear whether they have directly impacted the relationship between Fundamental Values and QA procedures.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of licensed institutions and accredited study programs can be found here:

<https://ncfhe.gov.mt/en/register/Pages/register.aspx>

#### 2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation

Unibasq notes how the regulatory framework in Spain, where the agency is based, identifies issues related to social responsibility of universities, and in particular the objectives of the 2030 agenda. Yet, the objectives lack clear operationalization. Also, Unibasq evaluation procedures do not develop further Fundamental Values.

It remains unclear whether this is being operationalized in other operating countries, like Malta.

Other agencies operating in Malta did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

Unibasq underlines that to the extent that these core values are embedded in either the normative or policy frameworks in which HEIs and QA agencies operate, they can play an important role.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

Unibasq sees as an opportunity the existing favourable political and social context, in which the promotion of Fundamental Values such as accountability, equitable access and social responsibility have great prestige. Different actors are establishing policies and frameworks for action in this regard, giving as an example the 2030 agenda and the SDGs of the United Nations. Regarding limitations, Unibasq refers to the resource constraints of QA agencies, the need for them to focus their efforts on improving the core processes of HEIs. Another important limitation or risk is, in Unibasq's opinion, associated with the fashion effect of some of the approaches to the promotion of core values and social responsibility of universities. Unibasq stresses that QA processes have always promoted Fundamental Values and social responsibility.. It understands that QAs can play an important role but is aware of their limitations in terms of available resources and methodologies of action and operations.



## MOLDOVA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Code of Education. 2014. Codul Educației No.152, Monitorul Oficial Nr. 319–324.
- Regulation No. HG201/2018 on the organization and operation of the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research. Government Decree № 201 of February 28, 2018.
- Regulation No. Nr. HG616/2016 on methodology of external quality evaluation for authorization for temporary operation and accreditation of educational programs and institutions of vocational education, higher and continuing education. Government Decree №616 of May 18, 2016.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified, except for the general references to the European and international standards.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; ARACIS – Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education; EKKA – Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. ARACIS calls upon public responsibility for higher education and research, as well as public responsibility of higher education, the ESG, institutional autonomy, participation of students in QA procedures, academic freedom, and ethical integrity, in methodology guidelines which are one of the best practice examples regarding inclusion of the Fundamental Values in the QA procedures. EKKA directly refers in its guidelines to the standard of academic ethics, which refers to the Fundamental Value of academic integrity.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

Key legislative framework on QA has been amended and adopted in the last years without further operationalization of Fundamental Values in the QA procedures.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://mecc.gov.md/ro/content/institutiile-de-invataman-t-superior>

#### 2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation

ARACIS, as per the Romanian regulatory framework, follows principles which promote quality culture which will consistently contribute to achieving high quality in higher education, defined as a public good, worthy of public trust, and contributing to students' personal development and achievement, as well as to the continuous improvement of the quality of life, of the national culture and economy within a European framework. This also includes academic integrity, academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and public responsibility for and of higher education. ARACIS rightly notes that various agencies might have different understandings of what "EHEA Fundamental Values" mean, so the free associations might not necessarily reflect the defined values as understood by this study. This has been confirmed in numerous survey responses as many times the responses referred to internal regulations like the Code of Ethics of the agencies themselves. This shows a lack of awareness and knowledge of the conceptualization of Fundamental Values in the EHEA.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

ARACIS promotes Fundamental Values in evaluation practices on a permanent basis. This involves assessing how standards and performance indicators referring to Fundamental Values are observed for each study program and at the level of HEI which is being evaluated. At the same time, the professional and ethical conduct of the evaluators is considered to be of utmost importance, and it is monitored.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

For ARACIS, Fundamental Values, "as [an] intrinsic part of higher education, irrespective of the study domain, should therefore become reflected in the standards and performance indicators of QA agencies as Fundamental Values contribute to personal development and education for democratic citizenship of students" and it strongly advocates for their inclusion in current practices of external and internal quality assurance practices.

## MONTENEGRO

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of Montenegro, consolidated 044/14 of October 21, 2014, 052/14 of December 16, 2014, 047/15 of August 18, 2015, 040/16 of June 30, 2016, 042/17 of June 30, 2017)
- Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in Montenegro (2016–2020) of July 2016.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No direct references to the Fundamental Values were identified.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

IEP directly refers to the ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom and student and staff participation in governance.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

No crucial developments were identified.

## 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

[http://www.erasmusplus.ac.me/uploads/file/List%20of%20HEIs%20in%20Montenegro\(1\).pdf](http://www.erasmusplus.ac.me/uploads/file/List%20of%20HEIs%20in%20Montenegro(1).pdf)

#### 2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation

The operating agency did not respond to our survey.

#### 2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices

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#### 2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices

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## NETHERLANDS

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Wet van 8 oktober 1992, Stb. 1992, 593 (Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek) [Higher Education and Scientific Research Act].
- Wet van 15 juni 2018, Stb. 2018, 209 (Wet accreditatie op maat) [Tailored Accreditation Act].
- Wet van 24 juni 2010, Stb. 2010, 293 (Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek in verband met aanpassing van het accreditatiestelsel) [Act of June 24, 2010 amending the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act in connection with the adjustment of the accreditation system]
- Wet van 4 december 2013, Stb. 2013, 558 (Wet versterking kwaliteitswaarborgen hoger onderwijs) [Reinforcement of Higher Education Quality Assurances Act].
- Beoordelingskader accreditatiestelsel hoger onderwijs Nederland, Staatscourant 2019, No. 3198 [Assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands of September 2018, published in Official Gazette No. 3198 2019].

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

The legislative framework calls upon the ESG, but also institutional autonomy, and, indirectly, public responsibility of and for higher education.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

ACPUA – Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education; AHPGS – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement; NVAO – Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders; QANU – Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities; Unibasq – Agency for Quality of the Basque University System; ZEvA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

ACPUA basic values underline the importance of student participation in QA processes, and social responsibility and transparency assuring public access to reliable, timely, clear and precise information which relates to the fundamental value of public responsibility for and of higher education. AHPGS in its handbook for program accreditation directly states that QA policies at HEI should support academic integrity and freedom. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for

valuing student participation in the QA processes. MusiQue standards outline Public Interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures. NVAO underlines institutional autonomy and public responsibility of higher education, further establishing the participation of staff and students in QA procedures. QANU will no longer exist after December 31, 2021. Unibasq refers to the ESG and international standards. ZEvA refers to autonomy and responsibility and, in the description of its mission, it reasserts “central ideas and principles...still shared by all” including academic freedom and autonomy.

#### 1.4 *National reforms on QA*

Assessment framework that came into force in September 2016 marked an important step towards the assessment of the quality of higher education programs and institutions in the Netherlands based on trust in the existing high quality of Dutch higher education. With the adoption of the “Wet accreditatie op maat” (Dutch Accreditation Act 2018), this principle is explicitly anchored in legislation. In order to align the accreditation framework with the new act, a limited number of adjustments were made to the September 2016 framework and adopted in 2018. The standards to be met by programs and institutions remained unchanged.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### 2.1 *Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A register of state funded accredited study programs can be found here:  
<https://apps.duo.nl/MCROHO/pages/zoeken.jsf>

### 2.2 *QA agencies’ practices in accreditation and evaluation*

ACPUA underlines its respect for and promotion of Fundamental Values that Spanish legislation has recently introduced (i.e. SDGs, Agenda 2030, democracy, inclusion and diversity, gender perspective), yet these values do not all fully correspond to the defined EHEA values.

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research, and participation of staff and students in governance while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It notes that EHEA value requirements increasingly contradict legislative frameworks. It also raises the issue of the link between Fundamental Values and the private HEIs.

Unibasq notes how the regulatory framework in Spain, where the agency is based, identifies issues related to social responsibility of universities, and in particular the objectives of the 2030 agenda. Yet, the objectives lack clear operationalization. Also, Unibasq evaluation procedures do not develop further Fundamental Values.

ZEvA stated that Fundamental Values are “not a question for QA but governmental oversight”.

Other agencies operating in the Netherlands did not respond to our survey.

### 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

ACPUA wanted to highlight as a good practice example its experience in gender mainstreaming and respect for sexual diversity through its Program ACPUA – Equality and Diversity. Within its scope of action, ACPUA has already been working for some years in favour of gender equality opportunities, the reduction of the gender gap in higher education and the introduction of the gender perspective. It has been maintaining dialogue with associations and groups such as AMIT-

Aragón (Association of Women Researchers and Technologists of Aragón), EUFEM (University Platform for Feminist and Gender Studies) or the Chair on Equality and Gender at the University of Zaragoza. From the specific point of view of the introduction of the gender perspective, it has exchanged methodologies and information on diagnostic elements and evaluation indicators with Spanish agencies especially committed to equality issues, such as AQU Catalunya and Unibasq. Since 2018 it has included in its activity reports a report on gender parity and equality in the composition of committees and panels of the Agency. In 2019 the evaluation perspective of this commitment to equality was strengthened thanks to the [ALCAEUS](#) program for the certification of centers according to Agenda 2030. In 2020, the aim is to give a considerable boost to this commitment to equality, which is already required by national and regional legislation. This will be done in the following way.

- Taking into account the emerging methodologies in the EHEA, a framework document will be developed to provide guidelines and indicators on the gender perspective for their subsequent introduction into evaluation protocols, both for degrees and for research activity.
- The design of a basic table of indicators that will make it possible to promote and make visible the commitment of the centers that make up the University System of Aragón to respect sexual diversity and the recognition and protection of the gender identity that each person adopts.

This activity should be considered as a constitutive part of the EHEA Fundamental Value of public responsibility of higher education. It remains unclear whether it is fully implemented in other countries in which ACPUA operates beyond Spain, like the Netherlands.

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

Unibasq underlines that to the extent that these core values are embedded in either the normative or policy frameworks in which HEIs and QA agencies operate, they can play an important role.

#### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

ACPUA believes “agencies can act as catalysts of the Fundamental Values for our HEI systems” but the challenge remains the development of good indicators and, in its view, additional efforts for building the case for all stakeholders.

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies’ experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.

Unibasq sees as an opportunity the existing favourable political and social context, in which the promotion of Fundamental Values such as accountability, equitable access and social responsibility have great prestige. Different actors are establishing policies and frameworks for action in this regard, giving as an example the 2030 agenda and the SDGs of the United Nations. Regarding limitations, Unibasq refers to the resource constraints of QA agencies, the need for them to focus their efforts on improving the core processes of HEIs. Another important limitation or risk is, in Unibasq’s opinion, associated with the fashion effect of some of the approaches to the promotion of core values and social responsibility of universities. Unibasq stresses that QA processes have always promoted Fundamental Values and social responsibility. It understands



that QAAs can play an important role but is aware of their limitations in terms of available resources and methodologies of action and operations.

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## NORTH MACEDONIA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of the RM, No. 82 – 8.5.2018)
- Law on Scientific Research Work (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 46/2008, 103/2008, 24/2011, 80/2012, 24/2013, 147/2013, 41/2014, 145/2015, 154/2015, 30/2016 and 53/2016)
- Law on educational inspection (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 52/2005, 81/2008, 148/2009, 57/2010, 51/2011, 24/2013, 137/2013, 164/2013, 41/2014, 33/2015 и 145/2015).
- Law on National Qualifications Framework (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No.137/2013 и 30/2016)

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

Only general references to ENQA guidelines and standards and the ESG were identified.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. IEP directly refers to the ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom and student and staff participation in governance.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

A new Law on Higher Education was adopted in 2018 but there were no significant changes identified.

## 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://mon.gov.mk/page/?id=2047>

#### 2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research, and participation of staff and students in governance while respecting the overarching EHEA

framework. It notes that EHEA value requirements increasingly contradict legislative frameworks. It also raises the issue of the link between Fundamental Values and the private HEIs.

Other agency operating in North Macedonia did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.



## NORWAY

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- LOV-2005-04-01-15 Lov om universiteter og høyskoler (universitets- og høyskoleloven) 2005 hefte 4 [Act relating to universities and university colleges].
- LOV-2019-06-21-61 Lov om endringer i universitets- og høyskoleloven og fagskoleloven (studentombud, trakassering og tilrettelegging) 2019 [Act on amendments to the Universities and University Colleges Act and the Vocational Schools Act (student ombudsman, harassment and facilitation)].
- The Norwegian Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (NQF), Ministry of Education and Research of December 2011.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No direct references to the Fundamental Values were identified.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; NOKUT – Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education; NVAO – Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders; ZEvA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values have been identified. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. NOKUT refers to public responsibility of higher education, academic freedom, through the demand of respect of the relevant University Act and refers directly to the ESG. NVAO underlines institutional autonomy and public responsibility of higher education, further establishing the participation of staff and students in QA procedures. ZEvA refers to autonomy and responsibility and, in the description of its mission, it reasserts “central ideas and principles...still shared by all” including academic freedom and autonomy.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

No crucial developments were identified.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.nokut.no/en/surveys-and-databases/accredited-institutions/>

2.2 *QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

ZEvA stated that Fundamental Values are “not a question for QA but governmental oversight”.

Other agencies operating in Norway did not respond to our survey.

2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

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2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

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## POLAND

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Ustawa z dnia 20 lipca 2018 r. Prawo o szkolnictwie wyższym i nauce, Dziennik Ustaw, 2018-08-30, no 1668 [Act of July 20, 2018 – Law on Higher Education and Science (Dz. U. no 1669)]
- Rozporządzenie Ministra Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego z dnia 20 września 2018 r. w sprawie dziedzin nauki i dyscyplin naukowych oraz dyscyplin artystycznych, Dziennik Ustaw, 2018-09-25, no 1818 [Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of September 20, 2018 on fields of science, scientific disciplines and artistic disciplines (Dz. U. no 1818)].
- Ustawa z dnia 7 lipca 2017 r. o Narodowej Agencji Wymiany Akademickiej, Dz.U. 2017 poz. 1530 [the Act of July 7, 2017 on the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange].

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

The only reference found in the legislative framework refers to the responsibility of higher education through “cooperation with the socio-economic environment”.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AHPGS – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; HCERES – High Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education; IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement; NVAO – Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders; PKA – Polish Accreditation Committee; Unibasq – Agency for Quality of the Basque University System; ZEVA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AHPGS in its handbook for program accreditation directly states that QA policies at HEI should support academic integrity and freedom. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to their specific criteria and guidelines. HCERES strongly underlines the importance of research integrity. It also understands the institutional positioning of the HEI as related to the value of public responsibility of higher education. Referring to institutional strategy, HCERES underlines institutional autonomy and responsibility, in social matters and sustainable development. Discussing institutional governance, HCERES asserts the importance of university democracy and participation of staff and students in QA procedures. Regarding research policies, HCERES underlines academic integrity and, further discussing students, asserts student participation in governance. IEP directly refers to the ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom and student and staff participation in

governance. MusiQue standards outline Public Interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures. NVAO underlines institutional autonomy and public responsibility of higher education, further establishing the participation of staff and students in QA procedures. PKA refers to public responsibility of higher education. Unibasq refers to the ESG and international standards. ZEvA refers to autonomy and responsibility and, in the description of its mission, it reasserts “central ideas and principles...still shared by all” including academic freedom and autonomy.

#### 1.4 *National reforms on QA*

New legislative acts have been adopted in recent years, but there were no significant relevant changes identified.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### 2.1 *Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of recognized institutions can be found here:

<https://nawa.gov.pl/en/recognition/polish-higher-education-system/higher-education-institutions>

### 2.2 *QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research, and participation of staff and students in governance while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It notes that EHEA value requirements increasingly contradict legislative frameworks. It also raises the issue of the link between Fundamental Values and the private HEIs.

Unibasq notes how the regulatory framework in Spain, where the agency is based, identifies issues related to social responsibility of universities, and in particular the objectives of the 2030 agenda. Yet, the objectives lack clear operationalization. Also, Unibasq evaluation procedures do not develop further Fundamental Values.

ZEvA has stated that Fundamental Values are “not a question for QA but governmental oversight”.

Other agencies operating in Poland did not respond to our survey.

### 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

Unibasq underlines that to the extent that these core values are embedded in either the normative or policy frameworks in which HEIs and QA agencies operate, they can play an important role.

### 2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.

Unibasq sees as an opportunity the existing favourable political and social context, in which the promotion of Fundamental Values such as accountability, equitable access and social responsibility have great prestige. Different actors are establishing policies and frameworks for action in this regard, giving as an example the 2030 agenda and the SDGs of the United Nations. Regarding limitations, Unibasq refers to the resource constraints of QA agencies, the need for them to focus their efforts on improving the core processes of HEIs. Another important limitation or risk is, in Unibasq's opinion, associated with the fashion effect of some of the approaches to the promotion of core values and social responsibility of universities. Unibasq stresses that QA processes have always promoted Fundamental Values and social responsibility. It understands that QAs can play an important role but is aware of its limitations in terms of available resources and methodologies of action and operations.





## PORTUGAL

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Lei n.º 46/86 – Diário da República n.º 237/1986, Série I de 1986-10-14 (Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo) [Law No. 46/86, of 14 October – (amended by Law No. 115/97, of September 19, and by Law 49/05, of August 30) [Comprehensive Law on the Education System].
- Lei n. 62/2007 Diário da República n.º 174/2007, Série I de 2007-09-10 (Regime jurídico das instituições de ensino superior) [Law No. 62/2007, of 10 September the legal framework of higher education institutions].
- Lei n.º 38/2007- Diário da República n.º 157/2007, Série I de 2007-08-16 (Aprova o regime jurídico da avaliação do ensino superior) [Law approving legal regime for the assessment of higher education].
- Regulamento n.º 392/2013 Regulamento dos procedimentos de avaliação e de acreditação [Regulation of assessment and accreditation procedures].
- Decreto-Lei n.º 74/2006-Diário da República n.º 60/2006, Série I-A de 2006-03-24 (Aprova o regime jurídico dos graus e diplomas do ensino superior, em desenvolvimento do disposto nos artigos 13.º a 15.º da Lei n.º 46/86, de 14 de Outubro (Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo), bem como o disposto no n.º 4 do artigo 16.º da Lei n.º 37/2003, de 22 de Agosto (estabelece as bases do financiamento do ensino superior) [Decree Law Approving the legal regime for higher education degrees and diplomas, in accordance with the provisions of Articles 13 to 15 of Law No. 46/86, of October 14 (Basic Law of the Educational System), as well as the provided for in No. 4 of article 16 of Law No. 37/2003, of August 22 (establishes the bases for financing higher education)].
- Decreto-Lei n.º 369/2007-Diário da República n.º 212/2007, Série I de 2007-11-05 (Cria a Agência de Avaliação e Acreditação do Ensino Superior e aprova os respectivos estatutos) [Decree Law Creating the Agency for Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education and approves its statutes].

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

The legislative framework refers generally to international standards, public responsibility of higher education, participation of students in QA procedures, and institutional autonomy.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

A3ES – Agency for Evaluation and Accreditation of Higher Education; ACPUA – Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education; AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; IIEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement.

### 1.3 *Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks*

A3ES calls upon the ESG and international standards, participation of students in QA procedures, and public responsibility of higher education. ACPUA basic values underline the importance of student participation in QA processes, and social responsibility and transparency assuring public access to reliable, timely, clear and precise information which relates to the fundamental value of public responsibility for and of higher education. No direct relation between QA processes and Fundamental Values is established. AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. IEP directly refers to the ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom and student and staff participation in governance. MusiQue standards outline public interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures.

### 1.4 *National reforms on QA*

No significant changes were identified.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### 2.1 *Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

[https://www.dges.gov.pt/en/pesquisa\\_cursos\\_instituicoes](https://www.dges.gov.pt/en/pesquisa_cursos_instituicoes)

### 2.2 *QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

ACPUA underlines its respect for and promotion of Fundamental Values that Spanish legislation recently introduced (i.e. SDGs, Agenda 2030, democracy, inclusion and diversity, gender perspective), yet these values do not all fully correspond to the defined EHEA values.

Other agencies operating in Portugal did not respond to our survey.

### 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

ACPUA wanted to highlight as a good practice example its experience in gender mainstreaming and respect for sexual diversity through its Program ACPUA – Equality and Diversity. Within its scope of action, ACPUA has already been working for some years in favour of gender equality opportunities, the reduction of the gender gap in higher education and the introduction of the gender perspective. It has been maintaining dialogue with associations and groups such as AMIT-Aragón (Association of Women Researchers and Technologists of Aragon), EUFEM (University Platform for Feminist and Gender Studies) or the Chair on Equality and Gender at the University of Zaragoza. From the specific point of view of the introduction of the gender perspective, it has exchanged methodologies and information on diagnostic elements and evaluation indicators with Spanish agencies especially committed to equality issues, such as AQU Catalunya and Unibasq. Since 2018 it has included in its activity reports a report on gender parity and equality in the composition of committees and panels of the Agency. In 2019 the evaluation perspective of this commitment to equality was strengthened thanks to the [ALCAEUS](#) program for the certification of centers according to Agenda 2030. In 2020, the aim is to give a considerable boost to this

commitment to equality, which is already required by national and regional legislation. This will be done in the following way.

- Taking into account the emerging methodologies in the EHEA, a framework document will be developed to provide guidelines and indicators on the gender perspective for their subsequent introduction into evaluation protocols, both for degrees and for research activity.
- The design of a basic table of indicators that will make it possible to promote and make visible the commitment of the centers that make up the University System of Aragon to respect sexual diversity and the recognition and protection of the gender identity that each person adopts.

This activity should be considered as a constitutive part of the EHEA Fundamental Value of public responsibility of higher education. It remains unclear whether it is fully implemented in other countries in which ACPUA operates beyond Spain, like Portugal.

#### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

ACPUA believes “agencies can act as catalysts of the Fundamental Values for our HEI systems”, but the challenge remains the development of good indicators and, in its view, additional efforts for building the case for all stakeholders.



## ROMANIA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- National Education Law No. 1/2011, consolidated of June 4, 2021, Official Gazette No. 18.
- Ordonanța de urgență nr. 75/2005 privind asigurarea calității educației, consolidarea din data de 29 iulie 2020, Monitorul Oficial, Partea I, nr. 642. [Emergency Ordinance No. 75 of July 12, 2005 consolidated of July 29, 2020 on ensuring the quality of education].
- Hotărâre Nr. 915/2017 din 14 decembrie 2017 pentru aprobarea Metodologiei de evaluare externă, a standardelor de referință și a A listei indicatorilor de performanță a Agenției Române de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Superior, Monitorul Oficial, NR. 25 din 11 ianuarie 2018 [Government Decision No. 915/2017 of December 14, 2017 [6] on amending the annex to Government Decision No. 1.418 / 2006 for the approval of the External Evaluation Methodology, of the reference standards and of the list of performance indicators of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education].
- Legea nr. 87/2006 pentru aprobarea Ordonanței de urgență a Guvernului nr. 75/2005 privind asigurarea calității educației, Monitorul Oficial, Partea I nr. 334 din 13 aprilie 2006, Nu există modificări până la 11 iunie 2016. [Law Ensuring the Quality of Education last amended on July 11, 2016].

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

The legislative framework refers to students' participation in QA procedures, public responsibility of higher education, academic integrity and academic freedom; further regulations were inaccessible in English.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AHPGS – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences; AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; ARACIS – Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; IAAR – Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating; IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AHPGS in its handbook for program accreditation directly states that QA policies at HEI should support academic integrity and freedom. AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. ARACIS calls upon public responsibility for higher education and research, as well as public responsibility of higher education, the ESG, institutional autonomy, participation of students in QA procedures, academic freedom, and ethical integrity, in methodology guidelines which are a best practice example regarding inclusion of the Fundamental Values in the QA procedures. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the

ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. IAAR standards rely exclusively on the ESG. IEP directly refers to the ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom and student and staff participation in governance.

#### *1.4 National reforms on QA*

There have been several amendments and legislative changes, with additional reflections in principles of QA regarding Fundamental Values. Performance indicators for ARACIS also include the need of study programs to help acquire skills such as “issues pertaining to sustainable society development, promotion of democracy, intercultural dialogue...” etc.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.edu.ro/institutii-invatomant-superior>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

ARACIS, as per the Romanian regulatory framework, follows principles which promote quality culture which will consistently contribute to achieving high quality in higher education, defined as a public good, worthy of public trust, and contributing to students' personal development and achievement, as well as to the continuous improvement of the quality of life, of the national culture and economy within a European framework. This also includes academic integrity, academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and public responsibility for and of higher education. ARACIS rightly notes that various agencies might have different understandings of what “EHEA Fundamental Values” mean, so the free associations might not necessarily reflect the defined values as understood by this study. This has been confirmed in numerous survey responses as many times the responses referred to internal regulations like the Code of Ethics of the agencies themselves. This shows a lack of awareness and knowledge of the conceptualization of Fundamental Values in the EHEA. At the same time, ARACIS reasserts its promotion of Fundamental Values in evaluation practices on a permanent basis.

IAAR, based in Kazakhstan, focuses on the ESG implementation in its QA procedures.

Other agencies operating in Romania did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

ARACIS promotes Fundamental Values in evaluation practices on a permanent basis. This involves assessing how standards and performance indicators referring to Fundamental Values are observed for each study program and at the level of HEI which is being evaluated. At the same time, the professional and ethical conduct of the evaluators is considered to be of utmost importance and it is monitored.

IAAR did not specify any further role.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

For ARACIS, Fundamental Values, “as [an] intrinsic part of higher education, irrespective of the study domain, should therefore become reflected in the standards and performance indicators of QA agencies as Fundamental Values contribute to personal development and education for democratic citizenship of students” and strongly advocates for their inclusion in current practices of external and internal quality assurance practices.

IAAR stated that in its view, effective implementation of Fundamental Values identified in the 2020 Rome Communiqué of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) requires foremost the “authorized bodies [Ministries of Education]...in order to improve deeper understanding and increase commitment of the governments to the Fundamental Values”.

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## RUSSIAN FEDERATION

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Федеральный закон от 29.12.2012 N 273-ФЗ "Об образовании в Российской Федерации" (с изм. и доп., вступ. в силу с 01.01.2017), SZRF [Federal Law of December 29, 2012, No. 273-FZ, Collection of legislation of the Russian Federation, 2012, No. 53]
- Федеральный закон от 2 декабря 2019 г. N 403-ФЗ "О внесении изменений в Федеральный закон "Об образовании в Российской Федерации" и отдельные законодательные акты Российской Федерации", SZRF [Federal Law of December 2, 2019, No.403-FZ on the Amendments to the Law on Education of the Russian Federation No. 273-FZ of 2012].
- Федеральный закон от 30.12.2020 N 517-ФЗ "О внесении изменений в Федеральный закон "Об образовании в Российской Федерации" и отдельные законодательные акты Российской Федерации" , SZRF [Federal Law of December 30, 2020, No. 517-FZ on the Amendments to the Law on Education of the Russian Federation No. 273-FZ of 2012].

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No direct references to Fundamental Values were identified.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AAC-DEVA – Andalusian Agency of Knowledge, Directorate for Evaluation and Accreditation; ACQUIN – Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute; AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; evalag – Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; IAAR – Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement; NCPA – National Centre for Public Accreditation; ZEvA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AAC-DEVA refers to the European standards in a general manner, without providing direct references to the Fundamental Values. ACQUIN refers to the necessity of the higher education institution to be embedded in its scientific and social environment, thus recalling the value of public responsibility of higher education; participation of students and staff in higher education governance; and regulations of the HEI that provide for conflict resolutions that preserve academic freedom. AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. Evalag includes Fundamental Values of the EHEA in its assessment criteria, most notably institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and participation of students and staff in Higher Education governance. FIBAA does not

refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. IAAR standards rely exclusively on the ESG. MusiQue standards outline Public Interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures. NCPA does not make direct references to the Fundamental Values, according to documents accessible in English. ZEvA refers to autonomy and responsibility and, in the description of its mission, it reasserts “central ideas and principles...still shared by all” including academic freedom and autonomy.

#### *1.4 National reforms on QA*

Major changes to education laws took place in 2013, and since 2018, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation has been divided into two entities: the Ministry of Education with the responsibility for preschool and secondary school education, and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation. In 2019, the whole regulatory framework went through a review. The Law from 2021 "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation" in Connection with the Adoption of the Federal Law "On State Control (Supervision) and Municipal Control in the Russian Federation" determines that the educational programs of research and research pedagogical personnel in postgraduate studies are not subject to state accreditation; and that from 2022, the state accreditation for all educational organizations will be permanent.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<http://www.russianenic.ru/english/cred/index.html>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

IAAR, based in Kazakhstan, focuses on the ESG implementation in its QA procedures.

NCPA declares that its processes are guided by the ESG, and that its internal documents reflect Fundamental Values including demands on student and staff participation in QA procedures, and respect for autonomy and academic freedom.

ZEvA has stated that Fundamental Values are “not a question for QA but governmental oversight”.

Other agencies operating in the Russian Federation did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

IAAR did not specify any further role.

NCPA sees its role as “studying the best practices of other national and international QAAs and adapting and implementing this experience in our country”. To this end, it actively participates in events organized by international networks ENQA, EQAR, CEENQA, APQN, INQAAHE, IREG. It organizes events in Russia, such as the ENQA Forum (St. Petersburg, 2014), the APQN Forum (Moscow, 2017), as well as annual national forums for experts. It presents on different QA issues at the federal venues of the State Duma.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*



IAAR has stated that, in its view, effective implementation of Fundamental Values identified in the 2020 Rome Communiqué of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) requires foremost the “authorized bodies [Ministries of Education]...in order to improve deeper understanding and increase commitment of the governments to the Fundamental Values”.

NCPA perceives recent legislative changes in the Russian Federation as an opportunity, followed by the claim that there is more freedom in the new Federal State Educational Standards for students to form flexible educational paths and recognition of competencies acquired outside the formal curricula. As a limitation, it notes the pandemic of Covid-19 as a factor which has brought about limitations to the freedom of movement, contributed to reducing the already low mobility of students and teachers, and created problems with site visits of QAAs.



## SAN MARINO

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Legge 30 novembre 1995 n.132 sulle Modifiche ed Integrazioni alla Legge Quadro Sulla Istruzione Universitaria e le Istituzioni di Cultura Superiore, Bollettino Ufficiale Della Repubblica di San Marino n.132. [Law on the Amendments and Integration to the Law on Higher Education and Institutions of Higher Formation of 1995].
- Legge 25 aprile 2014 n.67 Legge quadro sulla istruzione universitaria, Bollettino Ufficiale Della Repubblica di San Marino n.67 [Law on Higher Education of 2014].
- Legge 25 aprile 2014 n.67, *allegato A*, Statuto dell'università degli studi di San Marino. [Law No. 67 of 25 April 2014, *Annex A*, Statute of the University of San Marino].
- Legge 25 aprile 2014 n.67, *allegato B*, Codice etico dell'università degli studi di San Marino. [Law No. 67 of 25 April 2014, *Annex B*, Code of Ethics of the University of San Marino].

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

Only general references to the ESG were identified.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

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#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

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#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

A Law on Higher Education was adopted in 2014 but no significant changes were identified.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

The University of the Republic of San Marino is the only institute of higher education in the country.

#### 2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation

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#### 2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices

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2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

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## SERBIA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Закон о високом образовању, "Службени гласник РС" бр. 88 од 29. септембра 2017., 27/2018-3 (др. закон), 73/2018-7, 67/2019-3, 6/2020-3 (др. закон), 6/2020-20 (др. закон), 11/2021-3, 67/2021-3 (др. закон), 67/2021-7. [Law on Higher Education, Official Gazette of RS No. 88 of September 29, 2017, last amended by 67/2021/7].
- Закон о изменама и допунама Закона о високом образовању, „Службени Гласник РС, бр. 67 од 2. јула 2021. [Law on the Amendments to the Law on Higher Education, Official Gazette, No.67 of July 2, 2021].
- Стратегија развоја образовања и васпитања у Републици Србији до 2030. године, „Службени Гласник“, бр. 63 од 23.06. 2021. [Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Serbia until 2030].

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

Only general reference to the European (including the ESG) and international standards is provided, without any direct references to the Fundamental Values.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. MusiQue standards outline public interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

Instead of CAQA, the new National Entity for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as NEAQA) was established by the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 9/2018 of February 2, 2018) as a national independent body in institutional, financial, administrative and professional matters in accordance with the Law on Higher Education of 2017. NEAQA was enlisted in the state register on March 9, 2018 and its Steering Committee was constituted on May 3, 2018.

## 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.nat.rs/ishodi-akreditacije-i-spk/>

## 2.2 *QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research, and participation of staff and students in governance while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It notes that EHEA value requirements increasingly contradict legislative frameworks. It also raises the issue of the link between Fundamental Values and the private HEIs.

Other agencies operating in Serbia did not respond to our survey.

## 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

## 2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.



## SLOVAK REPUBLIC

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Zákon č. 131/2002 Z.z. o vysokých školách a zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov [Law on Higher Education].
- Zákon č. 245/2008 Z.z. o výchove a vzdelávaní (školský zákon) a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov v znení neskorších predpisov [Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act) and on the change and supplement to some acts as amended by subsequent provisions].
- Zákon č. 269/2018 Z.z. o zabezpečovaní kvality vysokoškolského vzdelávania a o zmene a doplnení zákona č. 343/2015 Z. z. o verejnom obstarávaní a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov v znení neskorších predpisov [Act No. 269/2018 on quality assurance in higher education and on the change and supplement to Act No. 343/2015 Coll. on public procurement and on change and supplement to some acts as amended by subsequent provisions].

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No direct references were found in the law regarding Fundamental Values, even though the Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education refers to the ESG in their standards, including student participation in QA procedures and academic integrity.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

In 2018, a new QA law was adopted, but no significant changes regarding Fundamental Values were identified.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.minedu.sk/vysoke-skoly-v-slovenskej-republike/>

#### 2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation

No agencies operating in Slovak Republic responded to our survey.

2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

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2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

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## SLOVENIA

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Zakon o visokem šolstvu – ZVIŠ (Uradni list RS, št. 67/1993, 39/1995 Odl.US: U-I-22/94-15, 18/1998 Odl.US: U-I-34/98, 35/1998 Odl.US: U-I-243/95-13, 99/1999, 64/2001, 100/2003, 134/2003-UPB1, 63/2004, 100/2004-UPB2, 94/2006, 119/2006-UPB3, 59/2007-ZŠtip (63/2007 popr.), 15/2008 Odl.US: U-I-370/06-20, 64/2008, 86/2009, 62/2010-ZUPJS, 34/2011 Odl.US: U-I-156/08-16, 78/2011, 32/2012-UPB7, 40/2012-ZUJF, 57/2012-ZPCP-2D, 109/2012, 85/2014, 75/2016, 61/2017, 65/2017) [Law on Higher Education].
- Zakon o raziskovalni in razvojni dejavnosti – ZRRD (Uradni list RS, št. 96/2002, 115/2005, 22/2006-UPB1, 61/2006-ZDru-1, 112/2007, 9/2011, 57/2012-ZPOP-1A, 21/2018-ZNorg, 9/2019) [Research and Development Act].
- Zakon o organizaciji in financiranju vzgoje in izobraževanja – ZOFVI (Uradni list RS, št. 12/1996 (23/1996 popr.), 101/1999 Odl.US: U-I-215/96, 22/2000-ZJS, 64/2001, 101/2001 Odl.US: U-I-68/98-42, 108/2002, 14/2003-UPB1, 34/2003, 55/2003-UPB2, 79/2003, 115/2003-UPB3, 65/2005, 98/2005-UPB4, 117/2005 Odl.US: U-I-240/04-11, 129/2006, 16/2007-UPB5, 101/2007 Odl.US, 36/2008, 22/2009 Odl.US: U-I-205/07-10, 55/2009 Skl.US: U-I-356/07-13, 58/2009 (64/2009 popr., 65/2009 popr.), 16/2010 Odl.US: U-I-256/08-27, 47/2010 Odl.US: U-I-312/08-31, 20/2011, 34/2011 Odl.US: U-I-205/10-23, 40/2012-ZUJF, 57/2012-ZPCP-2D, 2/2015 Odl.US: U-I-269/12-24, 47/2015, 46/2016 (49/2016 popr.), 25/17-ZVaj, 47/2020 Odl.US: U-I-110/16-44) [Organization and Financing of Education Act].
- Zakon o vrednotenju in priznavanju izobraževanja (Uradni list RS, št. 87/2011, 97/2011-popr., 109/2012) [Assessment and Recognition of Education Act].
- Merila za akreditacijo in zunanjo evalvacijo visokošolskih zavodov in študijskih programov (Uradni list RS, št. 40/2014) [Criteria for the accreditation and external evaluation of higher education institutions and study programs].
- Merila za akreditacijo in zunanjo evalvacijo visokošolskih zavodov in študijskih programov (Uradni list RS, št. 42/2017, 14/2019, 3/2020, 78/2020, 82/2020-popr.) [Criteria for the accreditation and external evaluation of higher education institutions and study programs]
- Merila za akreditacijo visokošolskih zavodov in študijskih programov (Uradni list RS, št. 101/2004) [Criteria on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs].
- Merila za strokovnjake Nacionalne agencije Republike Slovenije za kakovost v visokem šolstvu (Uradni list RS, št. 21/2018) [Criteria for experts of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency in the field of Higher Education]
- Merila za mednarodno sodelovanje pri visokošolskem izobraževanju (Uradni list RS, št. 69/2017) [Criteria on international cooperation in higher education].



## Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

Within the legislative framework, it is only prescribed that QA procedures should be in conformity with the EU standards and international principles.

### *1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country*

ACQUIN – Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute; AHPGS – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences; AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; ASHE – Agency for Science and Higher Education; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme; SKVC – Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education; SQAA – Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency.

### *1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks*

ACQUIN refers to the necessity of the higher education institution to be embedded in its scientific and social environment, thus recalling the value of public responsibility of higher education; participation of students and staff in higher education governance; and regulations of the HEI that provide for conflict resolutions that preserve academic freedom. AHPGS in its handbook for program accreditation directly states that QA policies at HEI should support academic integrity and freedom. AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values have been identified. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. ASHE calls upon freedom of scientific research in their general statement, and within its QA standards recognizes participation of students and staff in governance. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. IEP directly refers to the ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom and student and staff participation in governance. SKVC refers directly to the ESG and public responsibility of higher education in its internal documents, yet does not made any other direct references to the Fundamental Values. SQAA refers to the ESG directly, notably student and staff participation in governance

### *1.4 National reforms on QA*

Since 2017 and the adoption of the consolidated Law on Higher Education, additional amendments to other legal acts regarding QA have also been adopted, but no significant changes regarding Fundamental Values were identified.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions and study programs can be found here:

<https://www.gov.si/teme/evs-evidenca-visokosolskih-zavodov-in-studijskih-programov/>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research, and participation of staff and students in governance while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It notes that EHEA value requirements increasingly contradict legislative frameworks. It also raises the issue of the link between Fundamental Values and the private HEIs.

SKVC, when carrying out procedures in Lithuania, is obliged to assure HEIs fulfil expectations of the Lithuanian Law on HE; but when operating abroad, it notes that it may or may not be checking requirements of those other countries – this depends upon the context and the purpose of the review. SKVC underlines that this is a significant difference and needs to be properly understood – national agencies working locally have national obligations, while reviews abroad can be purely developmental, enhancement-oriented, with no consideration of larger issues pertaining to the system level. SKVC also notes that each specific procedure and instruments for various QA processes that agencies undertake would require separate analysis in regard to operationalization of Fundamental Values.

Other agencies operating in Slovenia did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which the importance of the EHEA values is reasserted.

SKVC reminds us “that as a rule, QA agencies have not just one external QA instrument, but several, and their purposes are different (e.g., evaluation/review/audit of HEIs, programs, clusters of study programs etc.; monitoring of HEI activities; cross-sector thematic evaluations etc.); then there may be other types of activities, such as training events, round-table discussions, conferences; contribution to drafting national legislation etc.”.

SKVC takes up, as a good practice, the example of its principles of triangulation (sources for decision making include institutional SERs, evidence from interviews during the panel visit, and expert own opinion) and exhaustiveness, meaning other pieces of official information. More specifically, in order to capture all aspects of academic ethics and integrity, it requests information from the Academic Ethics Ombudsperson Institution on cases pertaining to the HEI under review. It remains unclear whether similar or the same principles are applied in evaluations in other countries like Slovenia.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies’ experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.

SKVC underlines that usually national QA agencies are not free to define the framework in which they operate – they can define their own methodologies respecting the overall legal framework. So, there are limits to what they can do: they can implement policies, not define them; at best – they participate in co-design of the policies. SKVC’s view is that “Fundamental Values may be taken for granted as being safeguarded in mature and well-functioning higher education systems, where democracy and the rule of law is respected, gender equality and ecological thinking promoted, etc. But if something goes wrong, and, following the democratic elections non democratic leaders are elected to the Parliament and correspondingly, doubtful appointments made at the levels of the Government and the Ministry, the quality assurance agency due to legal

hierarchies may also be subject to limitations imposed from the top and may not be in a position to defend and promote the Fundamental Values.”

SKVC’s proposal is that Fundamental Values should be better reflected in the ESG, as clear standards and not just guidelines. Another proposal would be to take up Fundamental Values as key elements of external evaluations of QA agencies, even if these cannot always be held accountable as they must conform to the national regulatory frameworks; but the monitoring of Bologna Process implementation could further strengthen the case for Fundamental Values among governments as well.

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## SPAIN

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

##### A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Ley Orgánica 3/2020, de 29 de diciembre, por la que se modifica la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación [Organic Law on the Amendments to the Organic Law on Education].
- Ley Orgánica 6/2001, de 21 de diciembre, de Universidades. «BOE» núm. 307, de 24 de diciembre de 2001 [Organic Law on Universities of 2001].
- Ley Orgánica 4/2007, de 12 de abril, por la que se modifica la Ley Orgánica 6/2001, de 21 de diciembre, de Universidades. «BOE» núm. 89, de 13 de abril de 2007 [Organic Law of 2007 on the Amendments to the Organic Law on Universities 2001].
- Real Decreto 822/2021, de 28 de septiembre, por el que se establece la organización de las enseñanzas universitarias y del procedimiento de aseguramiento de su calidad. «BOE» núm. 233, de 29/09/2021 [Royal Decree 822/2021, from September 28, which establishes the organization of university education and quality assurance procedure].
- LLEI 1/2003, de 19 de febrer, d'universitats de Catalunya [Law 1/2003, from February 19, on universities in Catalonia].
- LLEI 15/2015, del 21 de juliol, de l'Agència per a la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari de Catalunya [Law 15/2015, from July 21, on the Agency for the Quality of the University System of Catalonia].

##### Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

QA procedures in Spain are divided between the national level and regional levels (autonomous communities), in cooperation and automatic recognition of regional and national agencies' decisions. The legislative framework refers to the European standards, and public responsibility of higher education.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AAC-DEVA – Andalusian Agency of Knowledge, Directorate for Evaluation and Accreditation; ACPUA – Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education; ACSUCYL – The Quality Assurance Agency for the University System in Castilla y Leon; ACSUG – Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University System; ANECA – National Agency for the Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain; AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; AQU – Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme; madri+d – Fundación para el Conocimiento Madrimasd; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement; NVAO – Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders; Unibasq – Agency for Quality of the Basque University System.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AAC-DEVA refers to the European standards in a general manner, without providing direct references to the Fundamental Values. ACPUA basic values underline the importance of student participation in QA processes, and social responsibility and transparency assuring public access to reliable, timely, clear and precise information, which relates to the fundamental value of public responsibility for and of higher education. No direct relation between QA processes and Fundamental Values was established. ACSUCYL refers directly to the ESG, and public responsibility of higher education. ANECA refers only generally to the European standards. AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values have been identified. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. AQU refers in general to the European and international standards, notably the ESG, participation of students and staff in QA procedures, and public responsibility of higher education. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. IEP directly refers to the ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom and student and staff participation in governance. Madri+d makes only a general reference to the European and international standards. MusiQue standards outline public interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures. NVAO underlines institutional autonomy and public responsibility of higher education, further establishing the participation of staff and students in QA procedures. Unibasq refers to the ESG and international standards.

#### *1.4 National reforms on QA*

The Royal Decree 822/2021 was promulgated on September 28, 2021 and it identifies the ESG as evaluation criteria, including Fundamental Values such as institutional autonomy, academic freedom, student participation in governance, and public responsibility of higher education. The agencies are still developing protocols to implement this recent Decree and some claim that this was not a particular change as those values were also previously embedded in the framework. According to information provided by Unibasq, the general law on education is currently being reformed.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of accredited institutions and programs can be found here:

<https://www.educacion.gob.es/notasdecorte/compBdDo;jsessionid=3BE6D4D1FA8F7D5A112F3F490E34D75A>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

ACPUA underlines its respect for and promotion of Fundamental Values that Spanish legislation has recently introduced (i.e. SDGs, Agenda 2030, democracy, inclusion and diversity, gender perspective), yet these values do not all fully correspond to the defined EHEA values.

ANECA notes that the agency is still undergoing preparation of protocols which would implement recent legislative changes and inclusion of Fundamental Values. Given the recent nature of this royal decree, the agency is currently developing protocols to include these Fundamental Values.

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research, and participation of staff and students in governance while respecting the overarching EHEA

framework. It notes that EHEA value requirements increasingly contradict legislative frameworks. It also raises the issue of the link between Fundamental Values and the private HEIs.

AQU notes the constitutional value of institutional autonomy, as well as legislative framework at the federal and regional level in Catalunya. The law in Catalunya refers to institutional autonomy, academic freedom and accountability to society, but not in direct reference to QA. The legislative framework in Catalunya, establishing the agency, includes international and European standards without direct reference to Fundamental Values. AQU takes into account these frameworks in the implementation of its evaluation activities, giving them an opportunity to note whether specific Fundamental Values are endangered. Through advocacy for institutional accreditation, AQU promotes institutional autonomy and participation of staff and students in governance and QA procedures. AQU also believes that QA processes are key for public responsibility of higher education.

Unibasq notes how the regulatory framework in Spain, where the agency is based, identifies issues related to social responsibility of universities, and in particular the objectives of the 2030 agenda. Yet, the objectives lack clear operationalization. Also, Unibasq evaluation procedures do not develop further Fundamental Values.

Other agencies operating in Spain did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

ACPUA wanted to highlight as a good practice example its experience in gender mainstreaming and respect for sexual diversity through its Program ACPUA – Equality and Diversity. Within its scope of action, ACPUA has already been working for some years in favour of gender equality opportunities, the reduction of the gender gap in higher education and the introduction of the gender perspective. It has been maintaining dialogue with associations and groups such as AMIT-Aragón (Association of Women Researchers and Technologists of Aragon), EUFEM (University Platform for Feminist and Gender Studies) or the Chair on Equality and Gender at the University of Zaragoza. From the specific point of view of the introduction of the gender perspective, it has exchanged methodologies and information on diagnostic elements and evaluation indicators with Spanish agencies especially committed to equality issues, such as AQU Catalunya and Unibasq. Since 2018 it has included in its activity reports a report on gender parity and equality in the composition of committees and panels of the Agency. In 2019 the evaluation perspective of this commitment to equality was strengthened thanks to the [ALCAEUS](#) program for the certification of centers according to Agenda 2030. In 2020, the aim is to give a considerable boost to this commitment to equality, which is already required by national and regional legislation. This will be done in the following way.

- Taking into account the emerging methodologies in the EHEA, a framework document will be developed to provide guidelines and indicators on the gender perspective for their subsequent introduction into evaluation protocols, both for degrees and for research activity.
- The design of a basic table of indicators that will make it possible to promote and make visible the commitment of the centers that make up the University System of Aragon to respect sexual diversity and the recognition and protection of the gender identity that each person adopts.

This activity should be considered as a constitutive part of the EHEA Fundamental Value of public responsibility of higher education.

ANECA underlines its promotion of ethical principles through an "ANECA helix" award to recognize these values in university professors (<http://www.aneca.es/Sala-de-prensa/Noticias/2021/Convocado-el-Premio-Helice-ANECA-a-la-Calidad-Academica>).

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

AQU also underlines its gender mainstreaming program in its ex-ante accreditation procedures (program validation) and its ex-post accreditation procedures, that include monitoring the introduction of gender perspective in learning outcomes, teaching and evaluation activities, etc. Besides the general legislative framework in Spain calling for gender equality, including the laws on education, the Catalanian legislative framework (Article 28.1 of Law 17/2015) calls on universities to "introduce the mainstreaming of the gender perspective and of studies on the contribution of women throughout history in all areas of knowledge, academic activity and research, which must be included in the curriculum of bachelor degrees and postgraduate programs. It also establishes that: a) all university degrees must mainstream the gender perspective in the curriculum of all areas of knowledge and that gender-specific courses or modules must be created in the core curriculum; b) Universities must guarantee that the faculty staff is trained in gender mainstreaming and women's studies; c) Gender must be mainstreamed in the external quality assurance processes".

Unibasq underlines that to the extent that these core values are embedded in either the normative or policy frameworks in which HEIs and QA agencies operate, they can play an important role. As a good practice example, Unibasq mentions the quality seal of recognition of plans and actions related to the 2030 Agenda and the UN SDGs promoted by the QA agency ACPUA. Information on this can be found at this link: <https://acpua.aragon.es/en/acpua-certification-programme-2030-alcaeus>.

#### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

ACPUA believes "agencies can act as catalysts of the Fundamental Values for our HEI systems", but the challenge remains the development of good indicators and, in its view, additional efforts for building the case for all stakeholders.

ANECA sees the new Decree as an opportunity for further operationalization of Fundamental Values, while it perceives limitations in the integration of Fundamental Values "in the specific training programmes of each discipline".

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.

AQU stresses that Fundamental Values should not be taken for granted, but it sees that academic freedom and integrity are not "specially fostered or checked by QA procedures".

Unibasq sees as an opportunity the existing favourable political and social context, in which the promotion of Fundamental Values such as accountability, equitable access and social responsibility have great prestige. Different actors are establishing policies and frameworks for action in this regard, giving as an example the 2030 agenda and the SDGs of the United Nations. Regarding limitations, Unibasq refers to the resource constraints of QA agencies, the need for them to focus their efforts on improving the core processes of HEIs. Another important limitation or risk is, in Unibasq's opinion, associated with the fashion effect of some of the approaches to the

promotion of core values and social responsibility of universities. Unibasq stresses that QA processes have always promoted Fundamental Values and social responsibility.

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## SWEDEN

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- The Swedish Higher Education Act (1992:1434) of December 17, 1992, consolidated to Act (2021:317).
- The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) of February 4, 1993, consolidated to Act (2021:569).
- Act concerning authority to award certain qualifications (1993:792), consolidated to Act (SFS 2018:1351).

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

The only reference in the legislative framework to the Fundamental Values relates to student participation in governance.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement; UKA – Swedish Higher Education Authority; Unibasq – Agency for Quality of the Basque University System; ZEvA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. MusiQue standards outline public interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures. UKA refers explicitly to the ESG, and also underlines the role of students in QA procedures and governance, and public responsibility of higher education. Unibasq refers to the ESG and international standards. ZEvA refers to autonomy and responsibility and, in the description of its mission, it reasserts “central ideas and principles...still shared by all” including academic freedom and autonomy.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

The legislative framework has been consolidated over the last couple of years and UKA guidelines for reviewing the HEI's quality assurance processes for research were revised in 2021, as research became part of UKA's expanded mission. The reviews have been ongoing between 2017 and 2022.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of recognized institutions can be found here:

<https://www.uhr.se/en/start/recognition-of-foreign-qualifications/enic-naric-sweden/List-of-HEIs-in-Sweden/>

## 2.2 *QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

Unibasq notes how the regulatory framework in Spain, where the agency is based, identifies issues related to social responsibility of universities, and in particular the objectives of the 2030 agenda. Yet, the objectives lack clear operationalization. Also, Unibasq evaluation procedures do not develop further Fundamental Values.

ZEvA has stated that Fundamental Values are “not a question for QA but governmental oversight”.

Other agencies operating in Sweden did not respond to our survey.

## 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

Unibasq underlines that to the extent that these core values are embedded in either the normative or policy frameworks in which HEIs and QA agencies operate, they can play an important role.

## 2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

Unibasq sees as an opportunity the existing favourable political and social context, in which the promotion of Fundamental Values such as accountability, equitable access and social responsibility have great prestige. Different actors are establishing policies and frameworks for action in this regard, giving as an example the 2030 agenda and the SDGs of the United Nations. Regarding limitations, Unibasq refers to the resource constraints of QA agencies, the need for them to focus their efforts on improving the core processes of HEIs. Another important limitation or risk is, in Unibasq's opinion, associated with the fashion effect of some of the approaches to the promotion of core values and social responsibility of universities. Unibasq stresses that QA processes have always promoted Fundamental Values and social responsibility. It understands that QAs can play an important role but is aware of their limitations in terms of available resources and methodologies of action and operations.

## SWITZERLAND

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Interkantonale Vereinbarung über den schweizerischen Hochschulbereich (Hochschulkonkordat) vom 20. Juni 2013 [Inter-cantonal Agreement on Higher Education (Higher Education Agreement of June 20, 2013)].
- Federal Act on Funding and Coordination of the Swiss Higher Education Sector (Higher Education Act, HEEdA of September 30, 2011).
- Verordnung vom 23. November 2016 zum Hochschulförderungs- und Koordinationsgesetz [Ordinance on the HEEdA of November 23, 2016].
- Vereinbarung vom 26. Februar 2015 zwischen dem Bund und den Kantonen über die Zusammenarbeit im Hochschulbereich [Agreement between the Confederation and the Cantons on Cooperation in the Field of University Education of February 26, 2015].
- Richtlinien des Hochschulrates vom 28. Mai 2015 für die koordinierte Erneuerung der Lehre an den universitären Hochschulen der Schweiz im Rahmen des Bologna-Prozesses (Bologna-Richtlinien UH) [Guidelines of the Higher Education Council of May 28, 2015 for the coordinated reorganization of teaching at Swiss universities as part of the Bologna Process (Bologna Guidelines – Universities)].
- Ordinance of the Higher Education Council on Accreditation within the Higher Education Sector (HEEdA Accreditation Ordinance of May 28, 2015).

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

“Principles of freedom and the unity of teaching and research” are key criteria for institutional accreditation, including the compatibility with the EHEA, and inclusion of students and staff in QA procedures.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AAQ – Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance; ACQUIN – Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute; AHPGS – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; BAC – British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education; CTI – Engineering Degree Commission; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; evalag – Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; MusiQue – Music Quality Enhancement; ZEVA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AAQ directly refers to institutional autonomy with public responsibility of higher education (through accountability), as well as participation of students and staff in QA procedures. ACQUIN refers to the necessity of the higher education institution to be embedded in its scientific and social environment, thus recalling the value of public responsibility of higher education;

participation of students and staff in higher education governance; and regulations of the HEI that provide for conflict resolutions that preserve academic freedom. AHPGS in its handbook for program accreditation directly states that QA policies at HEI should support academic integrity and freedom. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. BAC makes no direct reference to the Fundamental Values. CTI underlines institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in QA procedures and in governance, and responsibility of higher education. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. Evalag includes Fundamental Values of the EHEA in its assessment criteria, most notably institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and participation of students and staff in Higher Education governance. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. MusiQue standards outline public interaction, which relates to the value of public responsibility of higher education and encourages student and staff participation in QA procedures. ZEvA refers to autonomy and responsibility and, in the description of its mission, it reasserts “central ideas and principles...still shared by all” including academic freedom and autonomy.

#### *1.4 National reforms on QA*

The latest developments in QA took place with the HEdA Accreditation Ordinance from 2015, although no further direct references to Fundamental Values were identified.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of recognized or accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.swissuniversities.ch/en/topics/studying/recognised-or-accredited-swiss-higher-education-institutions>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

CTI plans to strengthen its criteria and guidelines from 2022 with a stronger emphasis on environmental and social issues, which could be regarded as the Fundamental Value of public responsibility of higher education, including criteria such as: to build an inclusive and sustainable society; equality of all persons, regardless of gender, social background, disability; promotion and positive actions to guarantee access to HE and smooth integration for persons from different backgrounds, gender and special needs; ethics and deontology at school and in the profession; social responsibility of the engineer and taking into account the environmental impact of engineering and ecology. It is unclear whether these criteria will be equally implemented in countries outside of France where CTI operates.

ZEvA has stated that Fundamental Values are “not a question for QA but governmental oversight”.

Other agencies operating in Switzerland did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

CTI understands its role as crucial for the promotion of Fundamental Values, and believes its promotion of these was an incentive for certain private HEIs to work on their widening access programs and promotion of gender inclusiveness.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

CTI believes that the promotion of Fundamental Values within QA procedures further encourages a spill over effect to the educational processes themselves, in helping educate engineers as active citizens.

DR

## TURKEY

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Regulation of Quality Assurance in Higher Education of July 23, 2015, Official Gazette No. 29423.
- Law No. 2547 On Higher Education of November 4, 1981, Official Gazette No: 17506.
- Law No. 1739 National Fundamental Law on Education of June 14, 1973, Official Gazette No. 14574.
- Cabinet Decree No. 2015/8213 The Regulation on the Procedures and Principles Concerning the Implementation of the Turkish Qualifications Framework, Official Gazette No. 29537.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

No references to the Fundamental Values were identified.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AHPGS – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences; AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

AHPGS in its handbook for program accreditation directly states that QA policies at HEI should support academic integrity and freedom. AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values were identified. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. IEP directly refers to the ESG, which includes public responsibility of higher education, institutional autonomy and academic freedom and student and staff participation in governance.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

Regulation of Quality Assurance in Higher Education was adopted in 2015, and the Higher Education Quality Council of Turkey (THEQC) was reorganized in 2017.

## 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.yok.gov.tr/universiteler/universitelerimiz>

2.2 *QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

No agencies operating in Turkey responded to our survey.

2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

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2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

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## UKRAINE

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Law of the Republic of Ukraine No. 1556-VII of July 1, 2014 "On Higher Education", as amended on June 17, 2021.
- Law of the Republic of Ukraine No. 2145-VIII of September 5, 2014 "On Education".

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

The Law on Education stipulates that internal QA should include systems and mechanisms of ensuring academic integrity. All other documents of the legislative framework are not accessible in English.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation; IAAR – Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating; SKVC – Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education; ZEvA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. FIBAA does not refer specifically to Fundamental Values, except for valuing student participation in the QA processes. IAAR standards rely exclusively on the ESG. SKVC refers directly to the ESG and public responsibility of higher education in its internal documents, yet does not made any other direct references to the Fundamental Values. ZEvA refers to autonomy and responsibility and, in the description of its mission, it reasserts "central ideas and principles...still shared by all" including academic freedom and autonomy.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

In Ukraine before 2020, the licensing of every separate program subject area (specialty) was compulsory by the designated licensing body. Currently, only education activities at a certain HE level or for regulated professions remain subjects to licensing. From January 16, 2020, HEIs have the right to provide accredited programs only. Accreditation of education programs is conducted by NAQA from September 2019 (according to the Law on Education from 2017).

## 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://info.edbo.gov.ua/>



## 2.2 *QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

IAAR, based in Kazakhstan, focuses on the ESG implementation in its QA procedures.

SKVC, when carrying out procedures in Lithuania, is obliged to assure that HEIs fulfil the expectations of the Lithuanian Law on HE; but when operating abroad, the organization notes that it may or may not be checking requirements of those other countries – this depends upon the context and the purpose of the review. SKVC underlines that this is a significant difference and needs to be properly understood – national agencies working locally have national obligations, while reviews abroad can be purely developmental, enhancement-oriented, with no consideration of larger issues pertaining to the system level. SKVC also notes that each specific procedure and instruments for various QA processes that agencies undertake would require separate analysis in regard to operationalization of Fundamental Values.

ZEvA has stated that Fundamental Values are “not a question for QA but governmental oversight”.

Other agencies operating in Ukraine did not respond to our survey.

## 2.3 *The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

IAAR did not specify any further role.

SKVC reminds us “that as a rule, QA agencies have not just one external QA instrument, but several, and their purposes are different (e.g., evaluation/review/audit of HEIs, programs, clusters of study programs etc.; monitoring of HEI activities; cross-sector thematic evaluations etc.); then there may be other types of activities, such as training events, round-table discussions, conferences; contribution to drafting national legislation etc.”.

SKVC takes up, as a good practice, the example of its principles of triangulation (sources for decision making include institutional SERs, evidence from interviews during the panel visit, and expert own opinion) and exhaustiveness, meaning other pieces of official information. More specifically, in order to capture all aspects of academic ethics and integrity, it requests information from the Academic Ethics Ombudsperson Institution on cases pertaining to the HEI under review. It remains unclear whether similar or the same principles are applied in evaluations in other countries like Ukraine.

## 2.4 *Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

IAAR has stated that, in its view, effective implementation of Fundamental Values identified in the 2020 Rome Communiqué of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) requires foremost the “authorized bodies [Ministries of Education]...in order to improve deeper understanding and increase commitment of the governments to the Fundamental Values”.

Further on, SKVC underlines that usually national QA agencies are not free to define the framework in which they operate – they can define their own methodologies respecting the overall legal framework. So, there are limits to what they can do: they can implement policies, not define them; at best – they participate in co-design of the policies. SKVC's view is that “Fundamental Values may be taken for granted as being safeguarded in mature and well-functioning higher education systems, where democracy and the rule of law is respected, gender equality and ecological thinking promoted, etc. But if something goes wrong, and, following the democratic elections non democratic leaders are elected to the Parliament and correspondingly, doubtful appointments made at the levels of the Government and the Ministry, the quality

assurance agency due to legal hierarchies may also be subject to limitations imposed from the top and may not be in a position to defend and promote the Fundamental Values.”

SKVC’s proposal is that Fundamental Values should be better reflected in the ESG, as clear standards and not just guidelines. Another proposal would be to take up Fundamental Values as key elements of external evaluations of QA agencies, even if these cannot always be held accountable as they must conform to the national regulatory frameworks; but the monitoring of Bologna Process implementation could further strengthen the case for Fundamental Values among governments as well.

DR

## UNITED KINGDOM

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Further and Higher Education Act 1992, c.13.
- Higher Education and Research Act 2017, c.29.
- The Revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education 2018, UKSCQA/02.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies underlines institutional autonomy and the Quality Code emphasises student engagement, while in general the QAA underlines its commitment to the ESG. In Scotland, the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework has student engagement as one of its core pillars, as well as public information (please see more elaborated information on Scotland below). In Wales, the Welsh Quality Assessment Framework uses the European Standards and Guidelines as a key reference point. Its principles refer to institutional autonomy and having students as partners. The English regulatory framework (currently under revision) included “student engagement” as an indicator of quality to achieve regulatory compliance. The Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA) enshrines the autonomy of higher education institutions in England in law, along with other regulatory requirements. The Higher Education (Wales) Act 2015 protects institutional autonomy and academic freedom for Wales, and outlines how HEIs should be reviewed. The Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 upholds academic freedom, and ensures that students and staff are involved in higher education governance.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes; AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria; ASIIN – ASIIN e.V.; BAC – British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education; EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education; QAA – Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education; ZEvA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies’ regulatory frameworks

AQAS refers solely to the ESG in its criteria for external evaluation, thus no other specific references to the Fundamental Values have been identified. While AQ Austria documents are largely in German, in general the agency refers to the European Standards and Guidelines and student participation in the QA processes. ASIIN provides no access to relevant documents in a language other than German. BAC makes no direct reference to the Fundamental Values. EAEVE refers exclusively to the ESG, without providing access to its specific criteria and guidelines. QAA only refers to student participation in QA procedures. ZEvA refers to autonomy and responsibility and, in the description of its mission, it reasserts “central ideas and principles...still shared by all” including academic freedom and autonomy.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education was revised in 2018 and several accompanying documents followed. The 2021 Skills Bill proposes to outlaw essay mills in England, protecting academic integrity. The Office for Students announced that English regulatory requirements will shortly no longer refer to the UK Quality Code, although English providers are still encouraged to engage with the Code.

## **2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices**

### *2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country*

A list of recognized institutions can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/check-university-award-degree/recognised-bodies>

### *2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation*

AQ Austria is aware of Austrian accreditation requirements regarding freedom of research, and participation of staff and students in governance while respecting the overarching EHEA framework. It notes that EHEA value requirements increasingly contradict legislative frameworks. It also raises the issue of the link between Fundamental Values and the private HEIs.

QAA, as well as firmly embedding its principles in the UK regulatory frameworks supporting institutional autonomy, student and staff participation in QA procedures and governance, also in its latest QAA Strategy document refers to academic integrity and student engagement.

ZEvA has stated that Fundamental Values are “not a question for QA but governmental oversight”.

Other agencies operating in the UK did not respond to our survey.

### *2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices*

AQ Austria underlines its involvement in adequate and high-quality preparation of experts in the external QA practices, through which it reasserts the importance of the EHEA values.

QAA seeks to “encourage enhancement of quality, beyond baseline regulatory requirements”, firmly involving all stakeholders, including students and staff, and encouraging HEIs to implement the same principles in their internal processes. It is also active in promotion of academic integrity and prevention of cheating and fraud. QAA has been successful in campaigning for academic integrity and against essay mills. It established a UK wide Academic Integrity Charter, with over 180 HEIs signing up to it. QAA also produces a range of guidance for higher education institutions to help protect and promote academic integrity, particularly to help them manage the threats arising from essay mills and contract cheating, while successfully encouraging the government to legislate to outlaw essay mills in England. As a membership organization, QAA produces a range of materials to enhance the quality of provision for its members, including materials supporting student engagement and promotion of academic integrity.

### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

AQ Austria raises concerns about the political interplays in the developing field of QA at the European level and country level realities. It is especially concerned about possible directions towards micro-management, and lack of inclusion of the agencies' experiences and expertise in policy making at the European level.

QAA sees an opportunity for furthering student and staff participation in the transition to a digital environment as a consequence of Covid-19 pandemic, yet this brings up more threats to academic integrity, as essay mills and cheaters look to exploit new technologies and processes. It also makes note that if national governmental priorities do not align with the Fundamental Values, this could be a barrier for including them in QA practices.

DR

## SCOTLAND (UNITED KINGDOM)

### 1 Overview of the Quality Assurance system

#### 1.1 National/regional regulatory frameworks of Higher Education Quality Assurance system

A list of legal regulations addressing organization of QA in HE:

- Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016.
- Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013 (Act of the Scottish Parliament):2013, asp12.
- Further and Higher Education Act: 2005, asp6.

Identified Fundamental Values within the regulatory frameworks and legal analysis of the existing provisions:

The Further and Higher Education Act does not refer to QA procedure, but makes general references to the public responsibility of higher education, and participation of students and staff in governance. The Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework has student engagement as one of its core pillars, as well as public information. The Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 upholds academic freedom and ensures that students and staff are involved in higher education governance.

#### 1.2 A list of the EQAR registered QA agencies operating in the country

QAA Scotland is part of the UK-wide QAA, not registered separately with EQAR.

#### 1.3 Operating agencies' regulatory frameworks

QAA only refers to student participation in QA procedures.

#### 1.4 National reforms on QA

The Law on Higher Education was adopted in 2014, and reference to the ESG is made in internal documents of QAA Scotland, in the Enhancement-led Institutional Review Handbook from 2017.

### 2 Institutional accreditation and evaluation practices

#### 2.1 Data regarding institutional accreditation and evaluation within the country

A list of accredited institutions can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/check-university-award-degree/recognised-bodies>

#### 2.2 QA agencies' practices in accreditation and evaluation

QAA, as well as firmly embedding their principles in the UK regulatory frameworks supporting institutional autonomy, student and staff participation in QA procedures and governance, also in its latest QAA Strategy document refers to academic integrity and student engagement.

#### 2.3 The role of QA agencies beyond accreditation and evaluation practices

QAA seeks to “encourage enhancement of quality, beyond baseline regulatory requirements”, firmly involving all stakeholders, including students and staff, and encouraging HEIs to

implement the same principles in their internal processes. It is also active in promotion of academic integrity and prevention of cheating and fraud. QAA developed the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework in 2003 and has had student engagement at its heart ever since. The Scottish Enhancement Themes, managed by QAA, are three-year projects where staff and students from the sector can focus on areas of development.

#### *2.4 Opportunities and limitations of the use and introduction of Fundamental Values into the QA practices*

QAA sees an opportunity for furthering student and staff participation in the transition to a digital environment as a consequence of Covid-19 pandemic, yet this brings up more threats to academic integrity, as essay mills and cheaters look to exploit new technologies and processes. It also makes note that if national governmental priorities do not align with the Fundamental Values, this could be a barrier for including them in QA practices.



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<sup>54</sup> To the date of this study and to the best of our knowledge, there is a draft “Law on Higher Education and Scientific Research” which was supposed to be passed in 2019 but has been sent to the Constitutional Court for constitutional review in April 2021.

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- LOV-2019-06-21-61 Lov om endringer i universitets- og høyskoleloven og fagskoleloven (studentombud, trakassering og tilrettelegging) 2019 [Act on amendments to the Universities and University Colleges Act and the Vocational Schools Act (student ombudsman, harassment and facilitation)].
- The Norwegian Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (NQF), Ministry of Education and Research of December 2011.

### 35. Poland

- Ustawa z dnia 20 lipca 2018 r. Prawo o szkolnictwie wyższym i nauce, Dziennik Ustaw, 2018-08-30, no 1668 [Act of 20th July 2018 – Law on Higher Education and Science (Dz. U. no 1669)]
- Rozporządzenie Ministra Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego z dnia 20 września 2018 r. w sprawie dziedzin nauki i dyscyplin naukowych oraz dyscyplin artystycznych, Dziennik Ustaw, 2018-09-25, no 1818 [Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of September 20, 2018 on fields of science, scientific disciplines and artistic disciplines (Dz. U. no 1818)].
- Ustawa z dnia 7 lipca 2017 r. o Narodowej Agencji Wymiany Akademickiej, Dz.U. 2017 poz. 1530 [the Act of July 7, 2017 on the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange].

### 36. Portugal

- Lei n.º 46/86 – Diário da República n.º 237/1986, Série I de 1986-10-14 (Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo) [Law No. 46/86, of October 14 – (amended by Law No. 115/97, of September 19, and by Law 49/05, of August 30) [Comprehensive Law on the Education System].
- Lei n.º 62/2007 Diário da República n.º 174/2007, Série I de 2007-09-10 (Regime jurídico das instituições de ensino superior) [Law No. 62/2007, of September 10, the legal framework of higher education institutions].
- Lei n.º 38/2007- Diário da República n.º 157/2007, Série I de 2007-08-16 (Aprova o regime jurídico da avaliação do ensino superior) [Law approving legal regime for the assessment of higher education].
- Regulamento n.º 392/2013 Regulamento dos procedimentos de avaliação e de acreditação [Regulation of assessment and accreditation procedures].
- Decreto-Lei n.º 74/2006-Diário da República n.º 60/2006, Série I-A de 2006-03-24 (Aprova o regime jurídico dos graus e diplomas do ensino superior, em desenvolvimento do disposto nos artigos 13.º a 15.º da Lei n.º 46/86, de 14 de Outubro (Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo), bem como o disposto no n.º 4 do artigo 16.º da Lei n.º 37/2003, de 22 de Agosto (estabelece as bases do financiamento do ensino superior) [Decree Law Approving the legal regime for higher education degrees and diplomas, in accordance with the provisions of Articles 13 to 15 of Law No. 46/86, of October 14 (Basic Law of the Educational System), as well as the provided for in No. 4 of article 16 of Law No. 37/2003, of August 22 (establishes the bases for financing higher education)].
- Decreto-Lei n.º 369/2007 Diário da República n.º 212/2007, Série I de 2007-11-05 (Cria a Agência de Avaliação e Acreditação do Ensino Superior e aprova os respectivos estatutos) [Decree Law Creating the Agency for Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education and Approving its Statutes].

### 37. Romania

- National Education Law No. 1/2011, consolidated on June 4, 2021, Official Gazette No. 18.
- Ordonanța de urgență nr. 75/2005 privind asigurarea calității educației, consolidarea din data de 29 iulie 2020, Monitorul Oficial, Partea I, nr. 642 [Emergency Ordinance No. 75 of July 12, 2005 consolidated of July 29, 2020 on ensuring the quality of education].
- Hotărâre Nr. 915/2017 din 14 decembrie 2017 pentru aprobarea Metodologiei de evaluare externă, a standardelor de referință și a listei indicatorilor de performanță a Agenției Române de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Superior, Monitorul Oficial, NR. 25 din 11 ianuarie 2018 [Government Decision No. 915/2017 of December 14, 2017 [6] on amending the annex to Government Decision No. 1.418/2006 for the approval of the External Evaluation Methodology, of the reference standards and of the list of performance indicators of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education].
- Legea nr. 87/2006 pentru aprobarea Ordonanței de urgență a Guvernului nr. 75/2005 privind asigurarea calității educației, Monitorul Oficial, Partea I nr. 334 din 13 aprilie 2006, Nu există modificări până la 11 iunie 2016 [Law Ensuring the Quality of Education last amended on July 11, 2016].

### 38. Russia

- Федеральный закон от 29.12.2012 N 273-ФЗ "Об образовании в Российской Федерации" (с изм. и доп., вступ. в силу с 01.01.2017), SZRF [Federal Law of December 29, 2012, No. 273-FZ, Collection of legislation of the Russian Federation, 2012, No. 53]
- Федеральный закон от 2 декабря 2019 г. N 403-ФЗ "О внесении изменений в Федеральный закон "Об образовании в Российской Федерации" и отдельные законодательные акты Российской Федерации", SZRF [Federal Law of December 2, 2019, No.403-FZ on the Amendments to the Law on Education of the Russian Federation No. 273-FZ of 2012].
- Федеральный закон от 30.12.2020 N 517-ФЗ "О внесении изменений в Федеральный закон "Об образовании в Российской Федерации" и отдельные законодательные акты Российской Федерации", SZRF [Federal Law of December 30, 2020, No. 517-FZ on the Amendments to the Law on Education of the Russian Federation No. 273-FZ of 2012].

### 39. San Marino

- Legge 30 novembre 1995 n.132 sulle Modifiche ed Integrazioni alla Legge Quadro Sulla Istruzione Universitaria e le Istituzioni di Cultura Superiore, Bollettino Ufficiale Della Repubblica di San Marino n.132 [Law on the Amendments and Integration to the Law on Higher Education and Institutions of Higher Formation of 1995].

- Legge 25 aprile 2014 n.67 Legge quadro sulla istruzione universitaria, Bollettino Ufficiale Della Repubblica di San Marino n.67 [Law on Higher Education of 2014].
- Legge 25 aprile 2014 n.67, *allegato A*, Statuto dell'università degli studi di San Marino. [Law No. 67 of 25 April 2014, *Annex A*, Statute of the University of San Marino].
- Legge 25 aprile 2014 n.67, *allegato B*, Codice etico dell'università degli studi di San Marino. [Law No. 67 of 25 April 2014, *Annex B*, Code of Ethics of the University of San Marino].

#### 40. Serbia

- Закон о високом образовању, “Службени гласник РС” бр. 88 од 29. септембра 2017, 27/2018-3 (др. закон), 73/2018-7, 67/2019-3, 6/2020-3 (др. закон), 6/2020-20 (др. закон), 11/2021-3, 67/2021-3 (др. закон), 67/2021-7 [Law on Higher Education, Official Gazette of RS No. 88 of September 29, 2017, last amended by 67/2021/7].
- Закон о изменама и допунама Закона о високом образовању, „Службени Гласник РС, бр. 67 од 2. јула 2021 [Law on the Amendments to the Law on Higher Education, Official Gazette, No. 67 of July 2, 2021].
- Стратегија развоја образовања и васпитања у Републици Србији до 2030. године, „Службени Гласник“, бр. 63 од 23.06. 2021 [Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Serbia until 2030].

#### 41. Slovak Republic

- Zákon č. 131/2002 Z.z. o vysokých školách a zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov [Law on Higher Education].
- Zákon č. 245/2008 Z.z. o výchove a vzdelávaní (školský zákon) a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov v znení neskorších predpisov [Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act) and on the change and supplement to some acts as amended by subsequent provisions].
- Zákon č. 269/2018 Z.z. o zabezpečovaní kvality vysokoškolského vzdelávania a o zmene a doplnení zákona č. 343/2015 Z. z. o verejnom obstarávaní a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov v znení neskorších predpisov [Act No. 269/2018 on quality assurance in higher education and on the change and supplement to Act No. 343/2015 Coll. on public procurement and on change and supplement to some acts as amended by subsequent provisions].

#### 42. Slovenia

- Zakon o visokem šolstvu – ZVIŠ (Uradni list RS, št. 67/1993, 39/1995 Odl.US: U-I-22/94-15, 18/1998 Odl.US: U-I-34/98, 35/1998 Odl.US: U-I-243/95-13, 99/1999, 64/2001,

100/2003, 134/2003-UPB1, 63/2004, 100/2004-UPB2, 94/2006, 119/2006-UPB3, 59/2007-ZŠtip (63/2007 popr.), 15/2008 Odl.US: U-I-370/06-20, 64/2008, 86/2009, 62/2010-ZUPJS, 34/2011 Odl.US: U-I-156/08-16, 78/2011, 32/2012-UPB7, 40/2012-ZUJF, 57/2012-ZPCP-2D, 109/2012, 85/2014, 75/2016, 61/2017, 65/2017) [Law on Higher Education].

- Zakon o raziskovalni in razvojni dejavnosti – ZRRD (Uradni list RS, št. 96/2002, 115/2005, 22/2006-UPB1, 61/2006-ZDru-1, 112/2007, 9/2011, 57/2012-ZPOP-1A, 21/2018-ZNorg, 9/2019) [Research and Development Act].
- Zakon o organizaciji in financiranju vzgoje in izobraževanja – ZOFVI (Uradni list RS, št. 12/1996 (23/1996 popr.), 101/1999 Odl.US: U-I-215/96, 22/2000-ZJS, 64/2001, 101/2001 Odl.US: U-I-68/98-42, 108/2002, 14/2003-UPB1, 34/2003, 55/2003-UPB2, 79/2003, 115/2003-UPB3, 65/2005, 98/2005-UPB4, 117/2005 Odl.US: U-I-240/04-11, 129/2006, 16/2007-UPB5, 101/2007 Odl.US: 36/2008, 22/2009 Odl.US: U-I-205/07-10, 55/2009 Skl.US: U-I-356/07-13, 58/2009 (64/2009 popr., 65/2009 popr.), 16/2010 Odl.US: U-I-256/08-27, 47/2010 Odl.US: U-I-312/08-31, 20/2011, 34/2011 Odl.US: U-I-205/10-23, 40/2012-ZUJF, 57/2012-ZPCP-2D, 2/2015 Odl.US: U-I-269/12-24, 47/2015, 46/2016 (49/2016 popr.), 25/17-ZVaj, 47/2020 odl.US:U-I-110/16-44) [Organization and Financing of Education Act].
- Zakon o vrednotenju in priznavanju izobraževanja (Uradni list RS, št. 87/2011, 97/2011-popr., 109/2012) [Assessment and Recognition of Education Act].
- Merila za akreditacijo in zunanjo evalvacijo visokošolskih zavodov in študijskih programov (Uradni list RS, št. 40/2014) [Criteria for the accreditation and external evaluation of higher education institutions and study programs].
- Merila za akreditacijo in zunanjo evalvacijo visokošolskih zavodov in študijskih programov (Uradni list RS, št. 42/2017, 14/2019, 3/2020, 78/2020, 82/2020-popr.). [Criteria for the accreditation and external evaluation of higher education institutions and study programs. Published: 04.08.2017.]
- Merila za akreditacijo visokošolskih zavodov in študijskih programov (Uradni list RS, št. 101/2004) [Criteria on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs].
- Merila za strokovnjake Nacionalne agencije Republike Slovenije za kakovost v visokem šolstvu (Uradni list RS, št. 21/2018) [Criteria for experts of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency in the field of Higher Education]
- Merila za mednarodno sodelovanje pri visokošolskem izobraževanju (Uradni list RS, št. 69/2017) [Criteria on international cooperation in higher education].

#### 43. Spain

- Ley Orgánica 3/2020, de 29 de diciembre, por la que se modifica la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación [Organic Law on the Amendments to the Organic Law on Education].
- Ley Orgánica 6/2001, de 21 de diciembre, de Universidades. « BOE » núm. 307, de 24 de diciembre de 2001. [Organic Law on Universities of 2001].
- Ley Orgánica 4/2007, de 12 de abril, por la que se modifica la Ley Orgánica 6/2001, de 21 de diciembre, de Universidades. «BOE» núm. 89, de 13 de abril de 2007. [Organic Law of 2007 on the Amendments to the Organic Law on Universities 2001].

#### **44. Sweden**

- The Swedish Higher Education Act (1992:1434) of December 17, 1992, consolidated to Act (2021:317).
- The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) of February 4, 1993, consolidated to Act (2021:569).
- Act concerning authority to award certain qualifications (1993:792), consolidated to Act (SFS 2018:1351).

#### **45. Switzerland**

- Interkantonale Vereinbarung über den schweizerischen Hochschulbereich (Hochschulkonkordat) vom 20. Juni 2013 [Intercantonal Agreement on Higher Education (Higher Education Agreement of June 20, 2013)].
- Federal Act on Funding and Coordination of the Swiss Higher Education Sector (Higher Education Act, HEdA of September 30, 2011).
- Verordnung vom 23. November 2016 zum Hochschulförderungs- und Koordinationsgesetz [Ordinance on the HEdA of November 23, 2016].
- Vereinbarung vom 26. Februar 2015 zwischen dem Bund und den Kantonen über die Zusammenarbeit im Hochschulbereich [Agreement between the Confederation and the Cantons on Cooperation in the Field of University Education of February 26, 2015].
- Richtlinien des Hochschulrates vom 28. Mai 2015 für die koordinierte Erneuerung der Lehre an den universitären Hochschulen der Schweiz im Rahmen des Bologna-Prozesses (Bologna-Richtlinien UH) [Guidelines of the Higher Education Council for the coordinated reorganization of teaching at Swiss universities as part of the Bologna Process (Bologna Guidelines – Universities)].
- Ordinance of the Higher Education Council on Accreditation within the Higher Education Sector (HEdA Accreditation Ordinance of May 28, 2015).



#### **46. Turkey**

- Regulation of Quality Assurance in Higher Education of July 23, 2015, Official Gazette No. 29423.<sup>57</sup>
- Law No. 2547 On Higher Education of November 4, 1981, Official Gazette No: 17506.
- Law No. 1739 National Fundamental Law on Education of June 14, 1973, Official Gazette No. 14574.
- Cabinet Decree No. 2015/8213 The Regulation on the Procedures and Principles Concerning the Implementation of the Turkish Qualifications Framework, Official Gazette no 29537.

#### **47. Ukraine**

- Law of the Republic of Ukraine No. 1556-VII of July 1, 2014 “On Higher Education”, as amended on June 17, 2021.
- Law of the Republic of Ukraine No. 2145-VIII of September 5, 2014 “On Education”.

#### **48. United Kingdom**

- Further and Higher Education Act 1992, c.13.
- Higher Education and Research Act 2017, c.29.
- The Revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education 2018, UKSCQA/02.

#### **49. Scotland**

- Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016.
- Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013 (Act of the Scottish Parliament):2013, asp12.
- Further and Higher Education Act: 2005, asp6.

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<sup>57</sup> In July 2017, the Higher Education Quality Board became a public institution with administrative and financial autonomy and was renamed the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC).

### **1. A3ES – Agency for Evaluation and Accreditation of Higher Education**

- Decreto-Lei n.º 369/2007 Diário da República n.º 212/2007, Série I de 2007-11-05 (Cria a Agência de Avaliação e Acreditação do Ensino Superior e aprova os respectivos estatutos) [Decree Law Creating the Agency for Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education and approving its statutes].
- Lei n.º 38/2007 Diário da República n.º 157/2007, Série I de 2007-08-16 (Aprova o regime jurídico da avaliação do ensino superior) [Law approving legal regime for the assessment of higher education]
- Regulamento n.º 392/2013 Regulamento dos procedimentos de avaliação e de acreditação [Regulation of assessment and accreditation procedures].
- A3ES Regulation 392/2013, published in the DR, 2nd series, October 16, 2013 (approves the regime governing the procedures for assessment and accreditation of higher education institutions and their study programs)
- A3ES Regulation 869/2010, published in the DR, 2nd series, December 2, 2010 (approves the regime governing the organization and functioning of the Appeals Council, and also the regime governing procedures for review of decisions relating to assessment and accreditation of higher education institutions and their study programs).
- A3ES Decision 925/2018, published in the DR, 2nd series, August 17, 2018 (updates the fees for assessment and accreditation procedures).
- A3ES Decision 158/2015, published in the DR, 2nd series, February 6, 2015 (establishes the special procedure for accreditation renewal for study programs with previous accreditation or non-aligned with the regular accreditation cycle).
- A3ES Decision 2392/2013, published in the DR, 2nd series, December 26, 2013. (modifications of the elements characterizing a study cycle).
- A3ES Decision 1019/2013, published in the DR, 2nd series, May 3, 2013 (establishes the deadlines for the submission of requests for prior accreditation of new study programs and of self-assessment reports of study programs in operation).
- A3ES Resolution 53/2012, published in the DR, 2nd series, December 19, 2012 (establishes the effects of the non-accreditation of study programs in operation).

## **2. AAC-DEVA – Andalusian Agency of Knowledge, Directorate for Evaluation and Accreditation**

- The Andalusian Agency of Knowledge, Statutes, approved through the Decree 92/2011, April 19 (BOJA 4/29/2001), amended by Decree 1/2018, January 9, 2018 (BOJA 1/16/2018).

## **3. AAQ – Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance**

- The Swiss Accreditation Council, Regulation on the Organization of the Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance of March 12, 2015, approved by Higher Educational Council on May 28, 2015.
- The Swiss Accreditation Council, Regulation on the Organization of the Appeals Commission of June 5, 2015.

## **4. ACPUA – Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education**

- Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education, Statutes, approved by Decree of the Government of Aragon 239/2006 of December 4, 2006.
- Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education, Regulation on the Functioning of the Appeals Committee, approved by the Appeals Committee on January 16, 2016.

## **5. ACQUIN – Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute**

- ACQUIN, Leitfaden für Auditverfahren hochschulinterner Qualitätsmanagementsysteme nach HS-QSG, V1 September 2020 (ACQUIN, Guidelines for Audit Procedures of Internal University Quality Management Systems according to HS-QSG, V1 September 2020).
- ACQUIN, Leitfaden zur Institutionellen Akkreditierung Nach HFKG (ACQUIN) (ACQUIN, Guidelines for Institutional Accreditation according to HFKG (ACQUIN)).

#### **6. ACSUCYL – The Quality Assurance Agency for the University System in Castilla y León**

- Decree 15/2015 of February 19 approving the regulations of the Quality Assurance Agency for the University System in Castilla y León.
- ACSUCYL Code of Ethics, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, March 2014.
- ACSUCYL Quality Policy, approved by the Board of Directors of ACSUCYL on April 28, 2017.
- Organic Law 6/2001 of December 21, Governing Universities.
- Law 3/2003 of March 28, Governing Universities in Castilla y León.

#### **7. ACSUG – Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University System**

- Decree 6/2018, of January 11, approving the statutes of the Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University System consortium, DOG No. 20, January 29, 2018.
- Law 6/2013 of June 13, 2013 on the University System of Galicia, DOG No. 125, July 3, 2013.
- ACSUG Regulation of September 30, 2009 approving the system of functioning of its organ CGIACA (Comisión Galega de Informes, Avaliación, Certificación e Acreditación).

#### **8. AEQES – Agence pour l’Evaluation de la Qualité de l’Enseignement Supérieur**

- AEQES Deontological Code.
- AEQES Strategic Plan 2021–2025, approved by the Steering Committee in 2020.

#### **9. AHPGS – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences**

- AHPGS website <https://ahpgs.de/en/welcome-to-the-ahpgs/>

#### **10. AI – The Danish Accreditation Institution**

- The Danish Accreditation Institution, Quality Assurance Policy of January 2016.

### **11.AIC – Academic Information Centre**

- AIC Methodology for Organising the Assessment of Higher Education Institutions and Colleges approved by Chairperson of the Board of the AIC Foundation on September 23, 2019.
- Rules of Procedure of the Higher Education Quality Assurance Council approved by order of the Foundation “Academic Information Centre” No. 1-09 of February 25, 2019.
- Rules of the Study Quality Committee, approved by the Chairperson of the Board of the Higher Education Quality Assurance Council on April 1, 2019.

### **12.ANECA – National Agency for the Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain**

- Decree 112/2015 of December 11, 2015 approving the Statute of the National Agency for the Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain, BOE No. 302 of December 18, 2015.

### **13.ANQA – National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance**

- RA Government Decree No. 1486-Ů of November 27, 2008 on Charter of “National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance” Foundation.
- ANQA Code of Ethics and Rules of Conduct.
- ANQA Strategic Plan 2016–2020.

### **14.AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes**

- Decision of the Accreditation Commission of December 1, 2015 on Criteria and Indicators for Programme Accreditation, version of September 26, 2019.
- Decision of the AQAS Standing Commission on Criteria for Doctoral Programme Accreditation of August 20, 2019.
- Decision of the Accreditation Commission of August 23, 2016, version of May 11, 2020) Accreditation Procedures of Study Programmes for Higher Education Institutions outside of Germany.

- Decision of the Accreditation Commission of August 23, 2016, version of May 11, 2020 on Accreditation Procedures of Study Programmes for Higher Education Institutions outside of Germany.

#### **15.AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation**

- Leitfaden für die institutionelle Akkreditierung gemäß HFKG Version 1; 11. Mai 2018 (Guidelines for Institutional Accreditation according to HFKG Version 1; May 11, 2018).
- Fachhochschul-Akkreditierungsverordnung 2019 (University of Applied Sciences Accreditation Ordinance 2019).
- Verordnung des Boards der AQ Austria über die Akkreditierung von Privathochschulen 2021 (Ordinance of the Board of AQ Austria on the Accreditation of Private Universities 2021).
- AQ Austria Guidelines for International Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Degree Programmes (Bachelor, Master, PhD), adopted by the Board of AQ Austria in its 52nd meeting on February 13, 2019.
- Richtlinie für das Audit des hochschulinternen Qualitätsmanagementsystems, beschlossen in der 49. Sitzung des Boards der AQ Austria am 11.09.2018 (Guidelines for the Audit of the University's Internal Quality Management System, decided at the 49<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of AQ Austria on September 11, 2018).
- Audit des internen Qualitätsmanagementsystems Richtlinie für Universitäten, beschlossen in der 65. Sitzung des Boards der AQ Austria am 10.02.2021 (Audit of the Internal Quality Management System Guidelines for Universities, decided at the 65<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of AQ Austria on February 10, 2021).
- Audit des internen Qualitätsmanagementsystems Richtlinie für Fachhochschulen, beschlossen in der 65. Sitzung des Boards der AQ Austria am 10.02.2021 (Audit of the Internal Quality Management System Guidelines for the Universities of Applied Sciences, decided at the 65<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of AQ Austria on February 10, 2021).

#### **16.AQU – Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency**

- Act 15/2015, July 21, on the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency/AQU Catalunya (Published in the Official Journal of the Government of Catalonia, DOGC, dated July 23, 2015)

- AQU Guide to the International Quality Assurance of Higher Education – A tool for international academic mobility, October 2016.
- Decree 315/2016 of November 10, whereby the Statutes of the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency were approved (Published in the Official Bulletin of the Autonomous Government of Catalonia (DOGC) No. 7244 of November 10, 2016).
- Conditions for the recognition by AQU Catalunya of joint programs accreditations using the European Approach Framework, May 2020.
- AQU Guide to the accreditation of recognized Bachelor's and Master's degree programs, November 2020, 7<sup>th</sup> edition approved by the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee on November 19, 2020.

#### **17. ARACIS – Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education**

- ARACIS Statute of Organization and Functioning approved by the ARACIS Council on June 27, 2019.
- Regulation on the Internal Order of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, nr. 6022/07.11.2018.
- ARACIS Methodology for external evaluation, standards, standards of reference and the list of performance indicators of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, approved by Government Decision No.915/2017 (Romanian Official Gazette No. 25/11.01.2018).

#### **18. ASHE – Agency for Science and Higher Education**

- Government of the Republic of Croatia, Regulation on the Establishment of the Agency for Science and Higher Education of July 15, 2004, Official Gazette NN 101/2004, July 21, 2004.
- The Accreditation Council Ethical Codex of February 24, 2010 adopted at the 3rd meeting of the Council on February 19, 2010.
- The Statute of the Agency for Science and Higher Education of July 29, 2013.
- Rules of Procedure of the Agency for Science and Higher Education accreditation Council of December 21, 2009.

#### **19. ASIIN – ASIIN**

- ASIIN Grundsatzpapier (ASIIN-Policy) – Qualitätsmanagement-Handbuch/Quality Policy of February 10, 2021.

## **20. BAC – British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education**

- The British Accreditation Council for Independent – Accreditation Handbook.
- The British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education Strategic Plan 2019–2022 of June 2019.

## **21. CTI – Engineering Degree Commission**

- Charte de déontologie des Expert(e)s de la Commission des Titres d'Ingénieur, revue et approuvée en Assemblée Plénière le 19 janvier 2021 (Ethics Charter for Experts of the Commission for Engineering Qualifications, reviewed and approved by the Plenary Assembly on January 19, 2021).
- Charte de déontologie des membres de la Commission des titres d'ingénieur, revue et approuvée en Assemblée Plénière le 23 juin 2020 (Ethics Charter for Members of the Commission for Engineering Qualifications, reviewed and approved by the Plenary Assembly on June 23, 2020).
- Règlement intérieur de la Commission des titres d'ingénieur, validé en séance plénière du 8 juin 2021 (Rules of Procedure of the Commission for Engineering Qualifications, validated in plenary session on June 8, 2021).

## **22. CYQAA – The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education**

- Republic of Cyprus, The quality assurance and accreditation in higher education and the establishment and operation of an agency on related matters laws of 2015 and 2016 (136(I) of 2015/47(I) of 2016).
- CYQAA Quality Policy Statement.

## **23. EAEVE – European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education**

- EAEVE Statutes Approved by the General Assembly on May 30, 2019 in Zagreb, Croatia.



- Code of Conduct of EAEVE approved by ExCom October 30, 2014.
- EAEVE Establishments' Status, updated on June 21, 2021.
- European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training (ESEVT), Manual of Standard Operating Procedure 2019.

#### **24. EKKA – Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education**

- Archimedes Foundation, Procedure for formation of Estonian Higher Education Quality Assessment Council, Document OD 401-01/V1, approved on January 1, 2009.
- Rules of Procedure of Quality Assessment Council of Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency, approved by EKKA Quality Assessment Council on January 6, 2012, as amended on September 27, 2012.
- EKKA Quality Manual 10 November The Foundations for EKKA's Work Approved by the Management Board of Archimedes Foundation on June 30, 2017, No. 1-11.1/3890.
- EKKA Conceptual Plan of May 22, 2017.
- The Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education Development Plan for 2017–2022, approved by the Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education and the Quality Assessment Council for VET at the joint session on January 6, 2017.

#### **25. EQ-Arts – Enhancing Quality in the Arts**

- EQ-Arts, Governance Framework of July 2020.
- EQ-Arts, Quality Framework: history, mission, standards, procedures & regulations of June 2020.

#### **26. evalag – Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg**

- Satzung der Stiftung evalag (Evaluationsagentur Baden-Württemberg), In der Fassung vom 26. Februar 2009 (Bekanntmachung des Ministeriums für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst über die Änderung der Satzung der Stiftung evalag (Evaluationsagentur Baden-Württemberg) vom 26. Oktober 2009 im GBl. vom 18. November 2009, Nr. 20, S. 671-676), die zuletzt in § 2, §§ 8 bis 14 sowie

§§ 16 bis 19 durch Beschluss des Stiftungsrates vom 8. Juni 2021 geändert wurde (Bekanntmachung des Ministeriums für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst über die Änderung der Satzung der Stiftung evalag (Evaluationsagentur Baden-Württemberg vom 15. Juli 2021) im GBl Nr. 23 vom 29. Juli 2021). [Statutes of the evalag Foundation (Baden-Württemberg Evaluation Agency), in the version dated February 26, 2009 (as announced by the Ministry of Science, Research and Art on the changes for evalag Foundation (Baden-Württemberg Evaluation Agency) of October 26, 2009 in the Coll. of November 18, 2009, No. 20, S. 671-676), last amended in §2, §§8 to 14 and §§16 to 19 by resolution of the Board of Trustees of June 8, 2021 (as announced by the Ministry of Science, Research and Art on the amendments of the Statutes of evalag Foundation (Baden-Württemberg Evaluation Agency of July 15, 2021) in GBl No. 23 of July 29, 2021)].

- Evalag IQM-Handbuch Leitfaden zum internen Qualitätsmanagement, Dezember 2019 [Evalag IQM Manual Guide to Internal Quality Management, December 5, 2019].

#### **27.FIBAA - Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation**

- Assessment Guide for the Accreditation of Bachelor and Master Programmes by FIBAA.
- FIBAA Organizational Chart.

#### **28.FINEEC - Finnish Education Evaluation Centre**

- Act on the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (1295/2013).
- Government Decree on the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (1317/2013).
- FINEEC Audit manual for higher education institutions 2019–2024 of 2019.

#### **29.HAC - Hungarian Accreditation Committee**

- Hungarian Accreditation Committee Resolution No. 2000/9/VI/3 on HAC Code of Ethics.
- Deed of Foundation of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee, Document ID: 10969-2/2019 /PKF of July 5, 2019.
- Decision 2019/9/X/1 of the HAC Board on Rules of Organization and Operation of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee of October 15, 2019.

- Republic of Hungary, Government Decree 19/2012 of February 22, 2012 on certain aspects of quality assessment and improvement in higher education.

### **30.HCERES – High Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education**

- Hcéres: installation de l'Office Français de l'Intégrité Scientifique le 26 octobre 2017 (Hceres : Establishment of the French Office for Scientific Integrity October 26, 2017).
- Loi n°2013-660 du 22 juillet 2013 (Law No. 2013-660 from July 22, 2013).
- Décret n°2014-1365 du 14 novembre 2014 (Decree No. 2014-1365 from November 14, 2014).
- Bilan social du Hcéres, adopté par le Comité technique en séance du 27 avril 2021 (Social report of Hceres, adopted by the Technical Committee at the meeting of April 27, 2021).

### **31.IAAR – Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating**

- Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated November 1, 2016 № 629 On approval of the Rules for recognition of accreditation bodies, including foreign bodies, and formation of registers of recognized accreditation bodies, accredited educational organizations and educational programs (registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan on November 19, 2016 No. 14438).
- Statutes of the Non-Profit Institution “Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating”, Nur-Sultan 2019.
- Regulations on the Supervisory Board of a Non-profit Institution “Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating” approved by the decision of the sole founder Non-Profit Institution IAAR as of May 2, 2017, No. 4.
- Regulation on the Accreditation Council of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating, approved by Director Order “Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating” dated December 15, 2015, No. 40-15-OD (as amended and supplemented by Order No. 82-18/1-OD of September 28, 2018).
- Regulations on the Commission for Review of Appeals and Complaints, Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating, approved by Director Order “Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating” dated September 1, 2016, No.

33-16-OD (as amended and supplemented by Order No. 68-18/1-PA dated May 25, 2015).

- Regulation on the Expert Councils of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating, approved by Director Order “Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating” dated November 2, 2012, No. 15-12-OD (as amended and supplemented by Order No. 117-19-PA dated December 9, 2019).
- Regulations on rules of the institutional accreditation procedure of educational organizations, approved by Director Order “Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating” No. 13/1-16-OD, dated April 30, 2006 (as amended and supplemented by Order No. 82-18/1-OD of September 28, 2018).
- The Instruction on Development and Improvement of Standards of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating, approved by Director Order “Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating” No. 1/1-14-OD, dated January 31, 2014 (as amended and supplemented by Order No. 117-19-PA dated December 9, 2019).

### **32.IEP – Institutional Evaluation Programme**

- IEP Internal Quality Procedures.
- Charter of Conduct for IEP Pool Members.
- IEP Complaints and Appeals Criteria and Procedure
- IEP strategic priorities 2020–2025.

### **33.IQAA – Independent Agency for Quality Assurance in Education**

- IQAA Standards for Institutional Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions, General Provisions, Astana, 2019.
- IQAA Structure.

### **34.madri+d – Fundación para el Conocimiento Madrimasd**

- DECRETO 63/2014, de 29 de mayo, del Consejo de Gobierno, por el que se designa a la Fundación para el Conocimiento Madrimasd como órgano de evaluación en el ámbito universitario de la Comunidad de Madrid (Decree 63/2014, from May 29, of the Governing Council, by which the Madrimasd Foundation for Knowledge

is designated as an evaluation body in the university sphere of the Community of Madrid).

### **35. MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement**

- MusiQue Music Quality Enhancement Internal Regulations of October 2019.
- MusiQue Standards for Institutional Review of March 2015, as revised in November 2019.
- MusiQue Guidelines for Institutions of December 2019.

### **36. NCEQE – National Center For Educational Quality Enhancement**

- 2021 Action Plan for the Implementation of the 2021–2025 Strategy of the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement.
- 2021 NCEQE Strategic Goals for the 2021–2025 period.
- 2021–2025 Strategic Document of National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement.

### **37. NCPA – National Centre for Public Accreditation**

- NCPA the Statutes (excerpts in English, unofficial version).
- Standards and Criteria of Public Accreditation.

### **38. NEAA – National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency**

- Statute of the National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency, adopted by the Council of Ministers with an ordinance No. 25 dated February 18, 2005, State Gazette, issue No. 19 of March 1, 2005.
- Decision of the Accreditation Council of November 22, 2007 (Minute of meeting No. 34) on NEEA Code of Ethics, as amended and supplemented by a decision of the Accreditation Council of April 9, 2009 (Minute of meeting No. 13), by decision of the Accreditation Council dated September 5, 2013 (Minute of meeting No. 15) and by decision of the Accreditation Council of December 10, 2015 (Minute of meeting No. 28), amended and supplemented by Decision of the Accreditation Council of December 19, 2019 (Minute of meeting No. 22).

- Decision of the Accreditation Council of NEAA of December 19, 2019 (Minute No. 22) On rules of the organization and procedure of the advisory board of NEAA.
- Rules of Procedure of the activities of the Complaints and Alerts Commission of the National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency, as amended and supplemented by a decision of the Accreditation Council of December 19, 2019 (Minute of meeting No. 22).
- NEAA Development Strategy for the 2018–2023 period.

#### **39.NOKUT – Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education**

- NOKUT's Regulations concerning Supervision of the Educational Quality in Higher Education (Academic Supervision Regulations) of February 9, 2017.
- Act of April 1, 2005 No.15 relating to Universities and University Colleges (the University and University Colleges Act).
- Regulations of February 1, 2010 No.96 concerning Quality Assurance and Quality Development in Higher Education and Tertiary Vocational Education.

#### **40.NVAO – Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders**

- Integriteitscode NVAO, 1 januari 2021 (NVAO Integrity Code, January 1, 2021).
- Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, Mandaatbesluit NVAO, 13 Mei 2019 (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, NVAO Mandate Decree, May 13, 2021).
- Bestuursreglement Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie (NVAO), Augustus 2017 (Board Regulations for the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organization (NVAO), August 2017).
- Verdrag tussen het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden en de Vlaamse Gemeenschap van België inzake de accreditatie van opleidingen binnen het Nederlandse en Vlaamse hoger onderwijs; (met Bijlage) 's-Gravenhage, 3 september 2003, 39 (2003) No. 3, Jaargang 2013 Nr. 15 (Agreement between the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Flemish Community of Belgium on the accreditation of programs in Dutch and Flemish higher education (with appendix), The Hague, September 3, 2003, 39 (2003) No. 3, Volume 2013 No. 15).

#### **41.PKA – Polish Accreditation Committee**

- Annex to Resolution No. 4/2018 of the Polish Accreditation Committee of December 13, 2018 on Statutes of the Polish Accreditation Committee.
- Polish Accreditation Committee Evaluation Guide.
- Polish Accreditation Committee Code of Ethics of October 6, 2009, consolidated text taking into account changes introduced by a resolution of the Polish Accreditation Committee No. 1/2012 January 30, 2012 and Resolution No. 1/2013 of the Polish Accreditation Committee of March 6, 2013.

#### **42. QAA – Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education**

- The revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education, UKSCQA/ March 2, 2018.
- Articles of Association of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education adopted by written resolution on April 22, 2021.

#### **43. QANU – Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities**

Permanently closed.

#### **44. QQI – Quality and Qualifications Ireland**

- Code of Business Conduct for Members and Employees of Quality and Qualifications Ireland.
- Internal Quality Assurance Policy Relating to QQI's External Quality Assurance of Providers of Education and Training, January 2017.
- QQI Statement of Strategy 2019–2021.

#### **45. SKVC – Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education**

- SKVC Quality Manual of May 30, 2011.
- SKVC Methodology for evaluation of higher education study programs, approved by Order No 1-01-162 of December 20, 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education.
- Minister for Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, Order Regarding the Approval of the Statute of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education, November 14, 2016 No V-1002.

- Annex 4 kv-p4-v1, SKVC Quality Policy.
- Director of the Centre for quality assessment in higher education Order regarding the amendment to the Order No. 1-01-9 of the Director of the Centre for quality assessment in higher education of January 18, 2010 On the approval of the Statute of the Study Programme Evaluation Commission, December 16, 2011 No. 1-01-168.

#### **46. SQA – Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency**

- Sklep o ustanovitvi Nacionalne agencije Republike Slovenije za kakovost v visokem šolstvu (Uradni list RS, št. 114/09 in 57/15) (Decision on the establishment of the National Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 114/09 and 57/15).
- SQA Criteria for the accreditation and external evaluation of higher education institutions and study programs, adopted at the 145th session of the Council of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency on December 19, 2019.
- Strategic Development of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education for the 2021–2025 Period, adopted by the Agency Council at its 107th session on December 15, 2015.

#### **47. UKÄ – Swedish Higher Education Authority**

- Report 2016:15 on the National system for quality assurance of higher education–presentation of a government assignment, Swedish Higher Education Authority 2016.
- Guidelines for reviewing the HEIs' quality assurance processes for research, revised in May 2021.

#### **48. Unibasq – Agency for Quality of the Basque University System**

- Departamento de Educación, Política Lingüística y Cultura 2179, decreto 204/2013, de 16 de abril, por el que se aprueban los Estatutos de Unibasq-Agencia de Calidad del Sistema Universitario Vasco (Department of Education, Language Policy and Culture 2179, Decree 204/2013 of April 16, approving the Statutes of Unibasq – Agency for the Quality of the Basque University System).



- ACT 13/2012 of 28 June 2012 governing Unibasq – Agency for the Quality of the Basque University System.

#### **49.VLUHR QA – Quality Assurance Unit of the Flemish Higher Education Council**

- VLUHR QA Manual for the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes of January 2020.
- VLUHR QA Code of ethics and rules of conduct for members of the panel.
- VLUHR QA Manual for Programme Review of January 2020.

#### **50.ZEvA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency**

- ZEvA Statute of August 31, 2017.
- ZEvA Mission Statement of December 2013.
- Qualitätshandbuch der Zentralen Evaluations- und Akkreditierungsagentur Hannover (ZEvA), October 2020 (Quality Manual of the Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency (ZEvA), October 2020).

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## Annexes

### Annex I A list of EHEA countries and corresponding external QA agencies

EHEA Member States	EQAR agencies
Albania	AQ Austria; evalag; FIBAA
Andorra	ACPUA
Armenia	ANQA; ASIIN; EKKA; HCERES; MusiQue; NVAO
Austria	AAQ; ACQUIN; AHPGS; AQAS; AQ Austria; ASIIN; EAEVE; EQ-Arts; evalag; FIBAA; FINEEC; MusiQue; NVAO; ZEvA
Azerbaijan	AHPGS; ASIIN; FIBAA; IQAA
Belarus	IAAR
	AEQES; AQAS; CTI; EAEVE; EQ-Arts; MusiQue, NVAO; QANU; VLUHR QA; ZEvA

<b>Belgium</b>	
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	AQAS; AQ Austria; ASHE; ASIIN
<b>Bulgaria</b>	ACQUIN; AQ Austria; BAC; CTI; EAEVE; NEAA
<b>Croatia</b>	ASHE; ASIIN; EAEVE; NVAO
<b>Cyprus</b>	AHPGS; AQAS; ASIIN; CYQAA; FIBAA; QAA
<b>Czech Republic</b>	ACPUA; AQAS; ASIIN; BAC; EAEVE; EQ-Arts; FIBAA; IEP; MusiQue
<b>Denmark</b>	AI; EAEVE; NOKUT; NVAO; ZEvA
<b>Estonia</b>	AQAS; ASIIN; EAEVE; EKKA; MusiQue

<b>Finland</b>	AQAS; ASIIN; EAEVE
<b>France</b>	ACPUA; AQAS; ASIIN; CTI; EAEVE; FIBAA; FINEEC; HCERES; MusiQue; NCEQE; NVAO; Unibasq
<b>Georgia</b>	ASIIN; FIBAA; NCEQE
<b>Germany</b>	AAQ; ACQUIN; AHPGS; AQAS; AQ Austria; ASIIN; CTI; EAEVE; evalag; FIBAA; MusiQue; NVAO; Unibasq; ZEvA
<b>Greece</b>	BAC; EAEVE; QAA;
<b>Holy See</b>	
<b>Hungary</b>	AHPGS; AQ Austria; ASIIN; BAC; EAEVE; evalag; FIBAA; HAC; IEP
<b>Iceland</b>	MusiQue

<b>Ireland</b>	AQAS; BAC; EAEVE; IEP; QAA; QQI; Unibasq
<b>Italy</b>	AQAS; AQ Austria; ASIIN; EAEVE; IEP; NVAO
<b>Kazakhstan</b>	ACQUIN; ACSUG; AQAS; AQ Austria; ASIIN; FIBAA; IAAR; IEP; IQAA; MusiQue
<b>Latvia</b>	AIC; EAEVE; IEP
<b>Liechtenstein</b>	AAQ; ACQUIN; AQ Austria; evalag
<b>Lithuania</b>	ACQUIN; AHPGS; AQ Austria; EAEVE; evalag; FIBAA; IEP; PKA; SKVC
<b>Luxembourg</b>	AAQ; AQ Austria; CTI; FIBAA; HCERES; IEP; NVAO; QQI
<b>Malta</b>	ASIIN; Unibasq

<b>Moldova</b>	AQAS; ARACIS; EKKA
<b>Montenegro</b>	IEP
<b>Netherlands</b>	ACPUA; AHPGS; AQ Austria; ASIIN; EAEVE; FIBAA; MusiQue; NVAO; QANU; Unibasq; ZEvA
<b>North Macedonia</b>	AQ Austria; IEP
<b>Norway</b>	AQAS; EAEVE; NOKUT; NVAO; ZEvA
<b>Poland</b>	AHPGS; AQ Austria; ASIIN; EAEVE; HCERES; IEP; MusiQue; NVAO; PKA; Unibasq; ZEvA
<b>Portugal</b>	A3ES; ACPUA; AQAS; ASIIN; EAEVE; FIBAA; IEP; MusiQue
<b>Romania</b>	AHPGS; AQAS; ARACIS; ASIIN; EAEVE; FIBAA; IAAR; IEP



<b>Russian Federation</b>	AAC-DEVA; ACQUIN; AQAS; ASIIN; EAEVE; evalag; FIBAA; IAAR; MusiQue; NCPA; ZEvA;
<b>San Marino</b>	
<b>Scotland</b>	
<b>Serbia</b>	AQ Austria; ASIIN; MusiQue
<b>Slovak Republic</b>	ASIIN; EAEVE
<b>Slovenia</b>	ACQUIN; AHPGS; AQAS; AQ Austria; ASHE; ASIIN; FIBAA; IEP; SKVC; SQAA; EAEVE
<b>Spain</b>	AAC-DEVA; ACPUA; ACSUCYL; ACSUG; ANECA; AQAS; AQ Austria; AQU; ASIIN; IEP; madri+d; MusiQue; NVAO; Unibasq
<b>Sweden</b>	ASIIN; EAEVE; MusiQue; UKA; Unibasq; ZEvA

Switzerland	AAQ; ACQUIN; AHPGS; ASIIN; BAC; CTI; EAEVE; evalag; FIBAA; MusiQue; ZEvA
Turkey	AHPGS; AQAS; EAEVE; FIBAA; IEP
Ukraine	ASIIN; EAEVE; FIBAA; IAAR; SKVC; ZEvA
United Kingdom	AQAS; AQ Austria; ASIIN; BAC; EAEVE; QAA; ZEvA



***The Yehuda Elkana Center for Higher Education at Central European University***, named after the third President and Rector of the University, is a collaborative academic initiative promoting applied policy research and professional training in higher education. The Center builds on more than two decades of experience at CEU in promoting policy research in higher education, as well as policy advising and professional development programs for governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and higher education institutions from countries on all continents. The Center also builds on the long history of cooperation between CEU and the Higher Education Support Program (HESP) of the Open Society Foundations (OSF). The Center is committed to pursuing the overall open society mission of CEU through activities in the area of higher education policy. The Center places a particular focus on applied studies and practical initiatives regarding the relationship between higher education policies and practices, and issues of democratic development.

A separate research project, initiated at the beginning of 2021, ***The Global Observatory on Academic Freedom***, supported by the Open Society University Network (OSUN), conducts rigorous, innovative and pertinent scientific research aspiring to respond to the urgent need of rethinking the concept of academic freedom, a concept whose crisis we are witnessing throughout the world. New times pose new challenges, theoretical as much as empirical, and GOAF seeks to stimulate the debate, connect the interested stakeholders, and reflect upon possible pathways vital to the preservation of academic freedom and democratic societies.

***Dr Liviu Matei*** is Provost of Central European University and a Professor of Higher Education Policy. He taught at universities in Romania, Hungary and the US, consulted extensively in the area of higher education policy and conducted applied policy research projects for the World Bank, UNESCO, OSCE, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, and other international organizations (intergovernmental and non-governmental), national authorities and universities from Europe and Asia. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of the American University of Central Asia and serves on the editorial boards of the *Internationalization of Higher Education Journal* and the *European Journal of Higher Education*. He studied philosophy and psychology at Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj, and Sociology of Higher Education at Bucharest University, Romania. He received his PhD from the latter. He benefited from fellowships at the Institut Supérieur de Formation Sociale et de Communication, Bruxelles, The New School for Social Research, Université Paris X Nanterre, Université de Savoie, the Salzburg Seminar and the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme. His primary areas of expertise include university governance, funding, internationalization of higher education, academic freedom and university autonomy, quality assurance.

***Dr Milica Popović*** is a political scientist, specialized in Memory Studies, Political Sociology and Higher Education Studies. She obtained her PhD in Comparative Political Sociology at the Doctoral School of Sciences Po Paris, affiliated with CERI (Center for International Studies) and at the Interdisciplinary doctoral program in Balkan studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana. After finishing BA studies in Law at the University of Belgrade and MA studies in Political Science at the University Paris 2 Panthéon-Assas in France, Popović focused her academic research interests in the field of Memory Studies, looking into generational transmission of memory and the influences of memory and nostalgia onto the political identities. In parallel to her academic career and teaching experience at Sciences Po in Paris, Popović has extensive independent research and policy development experience in the field of Higher Education since 2003, designing and implementing various studies for the Council of Europe, the

European Commission and many others. In the early 2000s, Popović also worked for international organizations, including the United Nations Development Programme, in the field of rule of law and judiciary reforms, gaining experience in legal and institutional analyses. The Global Observatory for Academic Freedom, which she joined after a Visiting Fellowship at the University of Vienna, perfectly brings together the whole of her academic and professional experience.

**Dr Daniela Craciun** is a researcher at the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies. Daniela earned a PhD in Political Science from Central European University (Hungary). Her teaching and research interests lie in public policy, specifically higher education policy and in issues of research design, content analysis, and conceptualization. Daniela's PhD dissertation analyzed national higher education internationalization strategies from around the world using computer-assisted text analysis to lift empirical data to a conceptual level. Before coming to University of Twente, Daniela was a lecturer at Bard College Berlin and a tutor and academic advisor in the OLIVE Refugee Education Initiatives (Germany) and previously, a visiting scholar doing research or teaching at the University of Yangon (Myanmar), the Federal University of Sao Carlos (Brazil), and the Center for International Higher Education at Boston College (USA).

**Teodora Miljojkovic** is an SJD candidate at the Department of Legal Studies at Central European University in Vienna. Her research focuses on the rule of law and judicial independence principles through the assessment of the judicial reforms' phenomena in illiberal regimes. In this project, Miljojkovic was responsible for the desk-research and categorization of national legal frameworks within the European Higher Education Area, as well as of internal regulations on the accreditation procedures of EQAR agencies.

**Matyas Szabo** is Senior Program Manager at the Yehuda Elkana Center for Higher Education. He received his MA from CEU's Sociology Department in 1994. Matyas has worked as a junior research fellow and teaching assistant at CEU's Center for the Study of Nationalism, and as an analyst intern at the Radio Free Europe/Open Media Research Institute in Prague and since 1996, at the CEU. From 2000-2012 he headed the CEU Curriculum Resource Center (CRC), and between 2012 and 2015 he was the director of the Roma Access Programs (RAP). Matyas' main research interests in the area of higher education are the development of social science disciplines in post-socialist countries, and the ways in which international and global trends in knowledge production and the changing role of universities have impacted the content and teaching of social science curricula.



## Invitation for participation in the Study on the relationship between the Fundamental Values of Higher Education and Quality Assurance

We kindly ask you to participate in the study that Yehuda Elkana Center for Higher Education and OSUN Global Observatory on Academic Freedom are conducting for Council of Europe.<sup>58</sup> Your participation is of crucial importance for the precision and quality of the research process and data collection. With advance apologies for a short deadline, we kindly ask you to fill in the following survey: <https://forms.gle/1B2jT3qGouyHfeAf6> to the best of your capacities by the 5th of November. If you might need additional time, please get in touch and we will find a way to accommodate your schedule. We stay at your disposal if you might have any further questions or comments.

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<sup>58</sup> This study is not in any relation with the EQAR external evaluation you might have been already solicited for on behalf of Yehuda Elkana Center for Higher Education and collected data will not be made available for the evaluation purposes.

## Research process

The study addresses external<sup>59</sup> quality assurance agencies from States Parties to the European Cultural Convention that have successfully demonstrated compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) through inclusion in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). Currently, there are 50 such agencies.<sup>60</sup> The main object of the study is the role Fundamental Values play in the work of these agencies in their quality assurance evaluation practices. We investigate two key aspects:

- The regulatory frameworks of work of these agencies, at the national level and at the level of the agencies themselves
- The practice of the implementation of these frameworks and their de facto consequences for quality assurance (QA)

The central question of the study is formulated as: “What role do the Fundamental Values of higher education play in the framework and practice for quality assurance?”.

The Fundamental Values of higher education are understood as being those outlined in the 2020 Rome Communiqué of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA):

- institutional autonomy
- academic freedom and integrity
- participation of students and staff in higher education governance
- public responsibility for and of higher education.

The interconnectedness between higher education and democracy has been gaining importance in the last years, as we are nevertheless facing a crisis of, for example, academic freedom throughout the European Higher Education Area. Identifying the existing and potential linkages between the QA processes and Fundamental Values helps us identify the state of affairs, as well as a variety of possible approaches, conceptualizations and challenges to the enumerated values.

The methodological approach herewith focuses on country case studies, while providing a meta-analysis at the overall level of EHEA. The country case study approach allows for a precise understanding of the concrete consequences of QA procedures in the cases of (non)respect of Fundamental Values, and interconnectedness between the overall national policies towards HE and QA procedures.

Looking into the 49 EHEA member states,<sup>61</sup> the study will produce 49 country fact sheets, together with the meta-analysis at the EHEA level. The country fact sheets will comprehend both de jure and de facto review.

Regarding de jure analysis, we do not, this time, focus on the general regulatory provisions regarding Fundamental Values and HE at the national level (constitutional or legislative). The object of our de jure analysis is twofold:

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<sup>59</sup> Not related to the institutional internal QA procedures.

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.eqar.eu/register/agencies/> (Accessed May 17, 2021)

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.ehea.info/page-members> (Accessed May 17, 2021)

- National regulatory frameworks specifically targeting Quality Assurance
- Regulatory frameworks of the QA agencies operating in the respective country

The analysis of the existing regulatory frameworks of the 50 EQAR included agencies comprehends the guidelines issued by public authorities to external quality assurance agencies, identifying references to protecting and promoting the four EHEA Fundamental Values, including their own codified procedures and protocols. Through an extensive analysis of the relevant provisions, we will identify if the EHEA formulated Fundamental Values are included in the frameworks, at which levels, and are they accompanied by more elaborated definitions or measures. For example, are there concrete provisions sanctioning the lack of respect of academic freedom by the institutions that are being evaluated? How does the participation of students and staff reflect in the evaluation procedures? Is accreditation affected by the lack of respect of Fundamental Values?

Regarding de facto analysis, we will collect data through a survey shared with the agencies, focusing on the practical experiences of the conducted evaluations, accompanied by data obtained by semi-structured qualitative interviews to be conducted with a selected number of agencies' representatives and members of the evaluation teams. This part of the study expands de jure findings with de facto findings of the research, providing linkages with specific cases, outlining the convergences and divergences between the two, and provides an added value in investigating the level of awareness of the (need for) protection of Fundamental Values in the EHEA.

Based on the data acquired and analyzed within country fact sheets, we will provide a meta-analysis looking at the whole of the European Higher Education Area.

Sincerely yours,

Liviu Matei

CEU Provost

Milica Popović

OSUN Global Observatory on Academic Freedom

## Annex V A list of surveyed agencies

1. ACPUA – Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education
2. AIC – Academic Information Centre
3. ANECA – National Agency for the Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain
4. AQ Austria – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria
5. AQU – Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency
6. ARACIS – Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
7. CTI – Engineering Degree Commission
8. HAC – Hungarian Accreditation Committee
9. IAAR – Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating
10. IQAA – Independent Agency for Quality Assurance in Education
11. NCPA – National Centre for Public Accreditation
12. NEAA – National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency
13. QAA – Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
14. QQI – Quality and Qualifications Ireland
15. SKVC – Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education
16. Unibasq – Agency for Quality of the Basque University System
17. ZEvA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency