eqar ////

2010
ANNUAL REPORT

From the President of the Executive Board

Dear readers,

It is with great pleasure that we are presenting to you the Annual Report 2010 of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), a unique partnership of European governments and stakeholders.

After EQAR having operated for more than two years, the preparations for its external evaluation constituted its most important milestone in 2010. It has indeed been an honour for me to serve as the President of the Executive Board during these crucial and exciting times for the organisation.

Initiated at the first Joint Informal Meeting of EQAR statutory bodies and committees, the self-evaluation has been an excellent opportunity to reflect on our work since EQAR's founding in 2008, and to open a productive dialogue with and to receive comprehensive feedback from our stakeholders.

Equally importantly, the evaluation has enabled us to analyse the Register's initial impact on quality assurance in Europe. We are looking forward to the external evaluation by an independent panel in 2011, and we will be keen to discuss the panel's reflections with European governments and stake-

holders with a view to enhancing EQAR's impact and role in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

Our members, being the key stakeholders in higher education and more than half of the European governments participating in the Bologna Process, have engaged actively in the governance of EQAR. In the future, in an effort to make the Register an even more successful and effective tool, it will be vital to develop a much stronger ownership and support. I sincerely hope that, in the long run, all European countries will become Governmental Members of EQAR and will participate actively in EQAR's development and important contribution to EHEA.
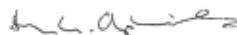
Professor Andreas G. Orphanides
President of the Executive Board
April 2011

From the Chair of the Register Committee

Dear readers,

It was an honour to be invited to chair the EQAR Register Committee. I wish to thank my predecessor, Justice Bryan McMahon, who chaired the Register Committee during the first two years of its existence, for paving the way in an excellent manner. The Register Committee can now build on a thorough set of principles, methods and precedents that were developed during the first two years.

My thanks also go to the distinguished individuals serving on the Register Committee. Their expertise and commitment are pivotal for EQAR's success, and have been an invaluable support when joining EQAR.

In 2010, we approved applications from 5 quality assurance agencies for inclusion on the Register. Amongst them were agencies based in France, Finland and Denmark, the first ones from these countries to be admitted to the Register after having evidenced their substantial compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG).

We also witnessed an increasing number of national governments that decided to use EQAR as an important reference in their national legislation, or that are planning to recognise quality assurance activities conducted by EQAR-registered agencies.

The year 2011 features some important milestones, most importantly the external evaluation of EQAR. We will also be discussing EQAR's input to the E4 organisation's project to map the implementation and application of the European Standards and Guidelines ("MAP-ESG"). Some registered agencies will already be submitting their applications for renewal of inclusion on the Register. My colleagues on the Register Committee and I are looking forward to another exciting year!

Kjell Frønsdal
Chair of the Register Committee
April 2011

„Will an evaluation by an agency that is in EQAR be valid not only in the country of the agency but also accepted in other countries?"

(Sjur Bergan, Council of Europe)

/// Summary

The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) was founded in 2008 to enhance transparency and trust in quality assurance of higher education. By the end of 2010 twenty-four agencies, active in twenty-three countries, were included on the Register.

Four European countries are using the Register in order to formally recognise the results or decisions of registered agencies in their jurisdiction. Two governments have made firm proposals to adapt national legislation and establish such recognition. The website – www.eqar.eu – has been the main information point for all interested parties. The information available on the website has been updated continuously. For the first time, feedback from website visitors was gathered in a survey as part of EQAR's self-evaluation process.

Recommendations for External Reviews

Concluding its first two-year mandate (ending 30/6/2010) the Register Committee compiled a Summary Report giving a comprehensive account of the Committee's work between 2008 and 2010. The Summary Report also contains Recommendations for External Reviews (see Annex 6). In addition to the formal requirements enshrined in the Procedures for Applications, the Recommendations are a collection of good practices that the Register Committee found helpful in making judgements on the basis of external review reports.

Joint Informal Meeting

In June 2010, EQAR organised the first "Joint Informal Meeting" for all those serving on its Executive Board, Register Committee and Appeals Committee. Being the only event gathering members of all these committees for a joint discussion, it served as a starting point for the self-evaluation process. The meeting was organised in an informal setting to allow discussions without the time pressure of regular, formal meetings with strict agendas.

External Evaluation

Preparing for the external evaluation of EQAR, requested by European ministers of higher education, was a priority topic for EQAR in 2010. The evaluation has been coordinated by a Steering Group working under the auspices and with the support of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA, USA). The Steering Group will appoint an Evaluation Panel, which will conduct a site visit and interviews in 2011.

A Self-Evaluation Group was set up to coordinate the self-evaluation process. It held its first meeting in Barcelona in June 2010 and has since been preparing EQAR's self-evaluation report. The Self-Evaluation Group built its reflections mainly on the results of the first Joint Informal Meeting, and feedback elicited from governments, agencies and stakeholders through interviews and surveys.

Outlook

The external Evaluation Panel is expected to complete its evaluation report in the autumn of 2011. EQAR will be organising a forum for its members and committees to discuss the results of the evaluation and proposals for a follow-up and implementation plan.

„EQAR is an important step towards the recognition of accreditation decisions between countries (e.g. double degree programmes)."

(Helke Biehl, Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute, ACQUIN)

//// Register of Quality Assurance Agencies

Applications and Admissions to the Register

In 2010, EQAR received a total of nine applications for inclusion on the Register, which were processed in two application rounds. In addition, the Register Committee concluded deliberations on one application that had been deferred from 2009. Seven quality assurance agencies were admitted to the Register, two in May and five in November.

The Register Committee convened twice, in Dublin on 15 May 2010 and in Paris on 13 November 2010. After each meeting, a Communiqué from the Chair of the Register Committee was released. These were published on the EQAR website.

Applications for Inclusion on the Register – Decided in 2010

	postponed from 2009	2010 spring	2010 autumn	2010 total
Applications	1	4	5	10
- accepted	1	2	4	7
- rejected		2		2
- withdrawn				

Please note:

/ One application was postponed in 2009. In May 2010, the Register Committee considered the additional representation made by the applicant and eventually approved the application..

/ One application was deferred pending additional representation by the applicant. A final decision will be taken at the Register Committee's first meeting in 2011.

Countries where registered agencies are based and operating – as of 31/12/10
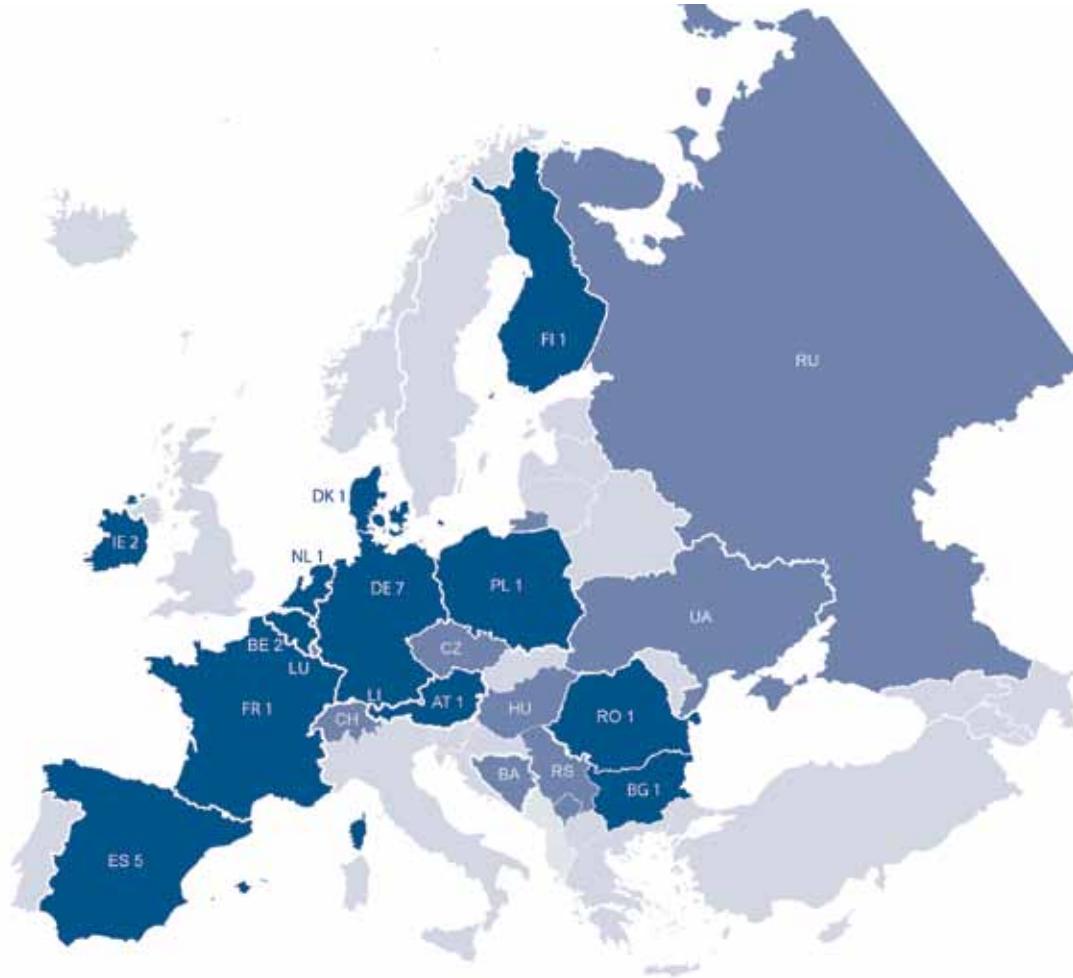
■ Countries where registered agencies are based

■ Registered agencies have also worked with higher education institutions in these countries. The work of quality assurance agencies outside the country they are based in is mostly on the basis of voluntary assignment by higher education institutions; this does not imply any official recognition or endorsement.

In the context of the self-evaluation process, 46 quality assurance agencies took part in a survey. The chart on page 19 shows the relevance attributed to different possible motivations for being registered or applying for inclusion on the Register.

The most often quoted reason is to improve the agency's international reputation, i.e. to gain a better standing in relation with its international partners through demonstrating (publicly) that they have proven their substantial compliance with the ESG in a robust and reliable process.

This is followed by the desire to improve their reputation nationally, to fulfil the expectations of governments or stakeholders, and to facilitate the recognition of institutions or programmes reviewed by the agency. These three are considered, virtually equally, "rather relevant" on average.

Information for Applicants

The Guide for Applicants summarises all relevant requirements and criteria for inclusion on the Register. This important information tool was first published in 2008. Applicants are regularly surveyed on the usefulness and contents of the Guide. Taking this feedback into consideration, the Guide for Applicants is updated or revised.

The new Recommendations for External Reviews will be part of future versions of the Guide for Applicants. All information on the application process is also available on the website, alongside a list of frequently asked questions. These are updated and revised when necessary.

Numerous applicants have been in contact with the EQAR Secretariat, which has provided additional advice where needed.

Summary Report of the First Register Committee

In November 2010, the EQAR Register Committee published a Summary Report, giving a comprehensive account of its criteria and procedures and the decision-making during its

Criteria and application process

Inclusion on EQAR is open to all quality assurance agencies that substantially comply with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG). This has to be evidenced through an external review by a team of independent experts.

The Register Committee makes its decision based on the external review report, the applicant's self-evaluation report and further documentation where appropriate. Rejected applicants have the possibility to file an appeal on procedural grounds or in case of perversity of judgement.

Further information on the application process and requirements for the external review process is available from the EQAR website and in the Guide for Applicants.

first two-year mandate. The report followed up the "report on the first two application rounds" published in October 2009.

The Summary Report gives a comprehensive account of the decision-making process of the Register Committee. Based on the applications that were considered between October 2008 and May 2010, it includes the Register Committee's observations on applying, the Procedures for Applications and the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) in its decision-making.

As a useful reference for future applicants and all those involved in the external review of quality assurance agencies, the report introduces Recommendations for External Reviews (see Annex 6). The Recommendations aim to further promote clear and comprehensive external review reports that serve as a robust basis for the Register Committee's decisions. The Recommendations address the need of external review reports to provide sufficient reliable evidence of the agency's compliance with the ESG in its relevant activities.

How the Register is Used in National Legislation

By the end of 2010, four countries had included a reference to registration on EQAR in their national legislation for various purposes. The following list summarises the examples:

Denmark:
Erasmus Mundus joint programmes offered by Danish and foreign institutions in cooperation do not require accreditation by the Danish national quality assurance agency if they are accredited by any EQAR-registered agency.

Danish institutions may only issue Danish diplomas for programmes offered abroad if these programmes are accredited either by the national Danish agency or an "internationally recognised" agency. EQAR-registered agencies are automatically considered "internationally recognised"; other agencies have to prove this in an individual procedure.

Germany:
Higher education institutions (HEIs) in Germany can turn to several QA agencies that are accredited by a national regulatory body, the German Accreditation Council, for periodic accreditation of their study programmes or at system level. Individual decisions of other agencies can be ratified by the Council, for instance accreditations of a joint programme between a German and a foreign institution, if that agency is registered on EQAR or a full member of ENQA.

Lithuania:
Lithuanian HEIs are subject to accreditation at institutional and programme level. While HEIs can opt for an external review conducted by any EQAR-registered QA agency, the accreditation decision remains responsibility of the national QA agency.

Romania:
All HEIs in Romania are subject to (initial) accreditation by the national QA agency, ARACIS. Once the HEI is accredited it is obliged to undergo periodic external evaluations. For these evaluations, HEIs can choose freely from amongst the registered agencies.

In Romania and Denmark, the national quality assurance agencies are required by law to seek registration on EQAR. In addition to these examples two national governments have

made firm proposals (to the responsible parliaments) for a reference to EQAR in their national legislation:

Austria:

The Austrian government has proposed to re-organise the external quality assurance system for higher education. In the new system, public universities as well as university colleges, after having been accredited for twelve years, would be obliged to undergo regular institutional audits by the Austrian national QA agency or any other agency that is included on EQAR.

Liechtenstein:

Being a small country, Liechtenstein has decided not to establish its own national agency for only one institution. Instead, the ministry of higher education will license (foreign) quality assurance agencies to carry out (periodic) accreditation. The ministry has announced that it will adopt a bye-law licensing all EQAR-registered agencies.

European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)

The ESG were adopted by European ministers of higher education in 2005 as a set of common principles and reference points for internal and external quality assurance of higher education. The ESG comprise three parts addressing:

1. Internal quality assurance

2. External quality assurance (addressing the process)

3. External quality assurance agencies (addressing organisational aspects)

The latter two are directly relevant for inclusion on EQAR.

The concept of "**substantial compliance**" underpins the understanding that the ESG are not a checklist, but a set of agreed principles and reference points for quality assurance. There are different ways in which an agency can adhere to the various principles. The judgement as to whether an agency complies substantially with the ESG is therefore not a mechanical process, but each case is considered holistically.

„There is the need to further the process of creating a common area of European QA, which possibly could be one of EQAR's tasks."

(Henning Detleff, BUSINESSEUROPE)

//// External Evaluation of EQAR

When mandating the E4 Group to establish EQAR, European ministers asked the E4 organisations "to ensure that after two years of operation, the register is evaluated externally, taking account of the views of all stakeholders".
(London Communiqué 2007)

The agreed Terms of Reference specify three main questions for the evaluation:

1. Are the organisational structures and methods of EQAR fit for purpose in the light of the agreed objectives? Have they functioned effectively and efficiently in practice?

2. What has been the initial impact of EQAR? Is it in line with the desired goals?

3. What improvements are desirable? How might the organisation develop and act further with a view to best achieving its mission and objectives?

Register Committee, Paris (November)

Steering Group

Consistent with the principles generally accepted for external reviews of quality assurance agencies, as a first step EQAR identified a suitable independent coordinator for the evaluation, which, in turn, will appoint the Evaluation Panel.

Following up initial discussions at the meeting in Stockholm (September 2009), the EQAR General Assembly of 19 February 2010 (Madrid) agreed that the evaluation should be coordinated by a Steering Group working under the auspices and with the support of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA, USA).

CHEA accepted the invitation. EQAR members were invited to suggest suitable individuals to serve on the Steering Group. The EQAR Executive Board appointed the Steering Group based on these proposals. The Steering Group includes:

/ Judith Eaton, President of CHEA (Chair)

/ Norman Sharp, former Director of the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland, as European quality assurance expert

/ Jan Levy, former Director General of the Norwegian Ministry of Higher Education, as higher education policy expert with a European governmental background

/ Martina Vukasović, Director of the Centre for Education Policy, Belgrade, as higher education policy expert with a European stakeholder background.

The Steering Group first met on 8 October 2010 and also visited the EQAR offices.

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference were agreed between EQAR and the Steering Group based on the initial plans endorsed by the General Assembly February 2010. EQAR members were consulted on the final draft Terms of Reference, before the Executive Board finally agreed the Terms of Reference with the Steering Group.

Self-Evaluation Process

A Self-Evaluation Group (SEG) has been coordinating EQAR's self-evaluation process. It is composed of the following individuals:

/ Lucien Bollaert (Register Committee, Chair of the SEG)

/ Andrea Blättler (Executive Board)

/ Dorte Kristoffersen (Register Committee)

/ Helle Otte (Denmark, Observer on the Register Committee)

/ Lesley Wilson (Executive Board)

/ Colin Tück (Director)

The task of the SEG is to draft a Self-Evaluation Report and to consult with all EQAR bodies on the report. In preparing the Report, the SEG drew upon the feedback regularly gathered from applicants, on internal reflections of the Register Committee and Executive Board as well as its own analytical reflections. Furthermore, the SEG obtained feedback on the workings of EQAR from four sources:

Interviews
A sample of European governments (EQAR members as well as non-members) and stakeholder organisations represented in the Bologna Follow-Up Group was interviewed. An external expert, Cornelia Racké, was commissioned to conduct the interviews.

Steering Group, EQAR offices (October)

Quality Assurance Agency Survey

Feedback from quality assurance agencies was gathered in a survey sent to all agencies in EQAR's contact database.

Website Visitors Survey

A short, general survey was published on the EQAR website for a period of 40 days.

Public Call for Comment

All interested parties were invited to submit more elaborate written comments in response to a Public Call for Comment.

The Steering Group will appoint the Evaluation Panel in January 2011. The final Self-Evaluation Report will be submitted to the Evaluation Panel by the end of March 2011. The Panel will conduct a site visit and interviews in May 2011. Afterwards, the Panel will prepare an external evaluation report. This report will be published in early 2012.

Motivations for quality assurance agencies to be registered

Improve reputation internationally

Facilitate (international) recognition of HEis/programmes accredited/evaluated/

Fulfil expectations of government(s) and/or stakeholders

Improve reputation nationally

Enhance possibilities to accredit/ evaluate/audit HEIs/abroad

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

■ not relevant at all   ■ not particularly relevant   ■ rather relevant   ■ very relevant

„In the long run, EQAR will only work if it is carried by a large number of countries. We now have the majority on board, which is good, but we are still far from covering the entire EHEA"

(Peter Greisler, Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Germany)

Website

The website is EQAR's main communication tool. It is updated on a regular basis with news items, such as press releases from EQAR, information about new publications and short summaries of outcomes of the General Assembly and Register Committee meetings.

In the context of the Self Evaluation of EQAR a website visitors survey was launched from 11 October 2010 until 30 November 2010. The total number of completed surveys amounted to 70. Even though the response rate was moderate, it gave a good indication as to who visits the EQAR website and for what reason.

Most visitors were QAA staff/representatives, student or academic staff (each approximately 20%). The main reasons for people visiting the EQAR website were research, viewing the registered agencies and learning more about EQAR in general (each approximately 20%). While students and academic staff visited the website mainly for research, the QAA visitors' main reason was to view the registered agencies. Most visitors found what they wanted and had a rather favourable opinion of the website.

General Assembly, Madrid (February)

Website visitors' overall impression

The site looks professional

It is easy to move around

I can find information easily

The design is visually pleasing

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

◼ Strongly disagree   ◼ Disagree   ◼ Neutral   ◼ Agree   ◼ Strongly Agree
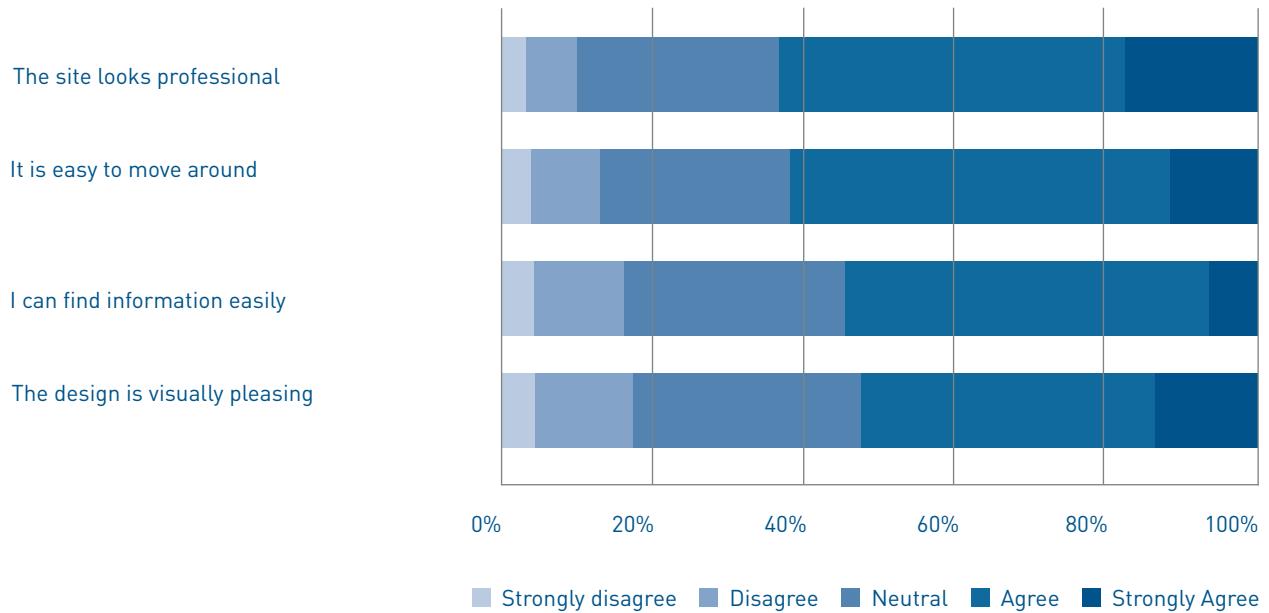
The EQAR website has attracted an increasing number of visitors throughout the year, with an average of ca. 6 000 visits per month in 2010 (ca. 2 500 visits per month in 2008, ca. 5 000 visits per month in 2009). This indicates that various measures taken by EQAR and its members to promote the organisation further among the relevant higher education stakeholders have been successful.

Publications

EQAR published its Annual Report 2009 just in time for distribution to ministers at the Bologna Process Anniversary Conference in Budapest and Vienna in March 2010. Each member of EQAR, as well as national affiliates of EQAR's stakeholder members and other partner organisations, received a paper copy of the Annual Report.

The Summary Report of the First Register Committee was published in November 2010. The report provides a comprehensive account of the criteria, procedures and the decision-making of the Register Committee during its two-year mandate. The report can be downloaded from the website and paper copies were distributed on several occasions.

The EQAR leaflet, which gives basic information on EQAR's mission and functioning, has proven a successful communication tool and is being used to provide easy understandable information on EQAR to larger audiences.

EQAR Office Opening and New Year Reception (January)

European Quality Assurance Forum, Lyon (November)

Representation and Relation with Partners

EQAR was represented in all major European events concerning quality assurance in higher education, by members of its statutory bodies or the Secretariat. These occasions have been used to promote EQAR's work and provide information to potential applicants and users.

In January 2010, EQAR organised an Office Opening and New Year Reception for its Brussels-based partners. About 40 people working in different higher education organisations in Brussels attended the event.

At the fifth European Quality Assurance Forum (Lyon 2010) EQAR organised a stand at the Forum Café.

Throughout the year EQAR received a number of visitors (researchers, stakeholder organisations, QA agencies and government officials) interested in EQAR and its workings.

„The registration of our agency on EQAR will contribute to consolidate its position as an active participant of the higher education QA landscape."

(Teresa Sánchez Chaparro, Engineering Degree Commission (CTI))

⫻ Organisation and Finances

Statutory Bodies

At the General Assembly of 19 February 2010, EQAR members elected a second Executive Board for a two-year mandate commencing on 1 March 2010:

/ Andreas Orphanides (President), EURASHE (re-elected)

/ Emmi Helle (Vice-President), ENQA (re-elected)

/ Lesley Wilson (Vice-President), EUA (re-elected)

/ Andrea Blättler (Treasurer), ESU

The functions of President, Vice-President and Treasurer rotate annually amongst the Executive Board members.

A new Register Committee was approved by the General Assembly for a two-year mandate starting on 1 July 2010.

Kjell Frønsdal, Judge of the Gulating Court of Appeal in Bergen, Norway, succeeded Mr Justice Bryan McMahon as the Chair of the Register Committee.

Gertie De Fraeye and Mindaugas Misiūnas were newly nominated to the Register Committee. The other eight members already served on the Register Committee during the previous mandate and were re-nominated.

The full composition of EQAR's statutory bodies is available in Annex 4.

Staff

Having served as Acting Director previously, Colin Tück was appointed Director of EQAR as from 1 January 2010. The part-time contract with Annelies Traas (Executive Officer) was increased to 60 percent as from 10 June 2010. The Secretariat now comprises 1,6 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff.

Accounts 2010

EQAR relies on a diversified funding base, including annual contributions from its members (governments and European stakeholder organisations), application and listing fees paid by quality assurance agencies, as well as start-up funding provided by the European Commission.

The financial year 2010 ended with a surplus of EUR 690,59. 2010 was the last year in which EQAR received a start-up grant by the European Comission.

Joint Informal Meeting, Barcelona (June)

Audited Accounts 2010

Balance Sheet (in EUR)			
Assets		**Liabilities and Equity**	
Fixed assets	**147,66**	**Own funds**	**162 214,66**
Guarantees	147,66	Profit/loss previous years	81 524.07
Liquid assets	**182 981,01**	Result per 31/12/2010	690,59
Receivables up to 1 year	6 195,25	Reserves	80 000,00
Cash	160 760,70	**Payables**	**20 914,01**
Adjustment accounts	16 025,06	Paybles up to 1 year	19 136,24
		Adjustment accounts	1 777,77
Total	**183 128,67**	**Total**	**183 128,67**

Profit and Loss Account (in EUR)			
Revenue		Expenditure	
Membership fees	174 500,00	Travel and subsistence	76 256,91
Application/ listing fees	26 204,19	Office and administration	40 512,19
European Comission grant	49 955,00	Staff	106 259,85
Other income	4 613,54	Other costs	31 553,19
Total	255 272,73	Total	254 582,14
Result (surplus)	690,59		

1. Mission and Values

EQAR's mission is to further the development of the European Higher Education Area by increasing transparency of quality assurance, and thus enhancing trust and confidence in European higher education.

EQAR seeks to provide clear reliable information on quality assurance provision in Europe, thus improving trust among agencies.

EQAR seeks to facilitate the mutual acceptance of quality assurance decisions and to improve trust among higher education institutions, thus promoting mobility and recognition.

EQAR seeks to reduce opportunities for "accreditation mills" to gain credibility in Europe, thus further enhancing the confidence of students, institutions, the labour market and society more generally in the quality of higher education provision in Europe.

To achieve its mission EQAR manages a register of quality assurance agencies operating in Europe that substantially comply with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG).

EQAR recognises the diversity of approaches to external quality assurance and is therefore open to all agencies, whether operating at programme or institutional level, whether providing accreditation, evaluation or audit services.

EQAR is committed to the principle on which the ESG are based: external quality assurance should recognise the central responsibility of higher education institutions for quality development and should be carried out by independent quality assurance agencies in a transparent, objective and responsible manner, involving their stakeholders and leading to substantiated results based on well-defined procedures and criteria.

EQAR acts independently from other organisations and is committed to taking proportionate, consistent, fair and objective decisions.

EQAR will make transparent its mode of operation and its procedures while ensuring necessary confidentiality. EQAR is committed to continuously improving the quality of its work.

(adopted by the EQAR General Assembly on 25 June 2008 in Sarajevo)

2. Overview of EQAR's structure

The founding of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) as a new, independent international non-profit association in March 2008 concluded a long phase of conceptual and preparatory work by the E4 Group, consisting of ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE.

The E4 Group drew up an operational model for a European register of quality assurance agencies in higher education in the run-up to the Bologna Process follow-up conference held in May 2007 in London. There, the ministers responsible for higher education in the 46 Bologna Process countries mandated the E4 organisations to set up a European register of quality assurance agencies.

EQAR's structure was developed based on the premise that the key stakeholders in higher education jointly bear the main responsibility to establish EQAR and to ensure its operation, as reflected in the mandate given to the E4 Group by ministers. At the same time, it was recognised that European governments bear the responsibility for Europe's higher education systems as a whole and thus needed to be involved in order to enhance overall accountability.

The E4 Group developed a structure featuring differentiated roles for governments and stakeholders, and several checks and balances (see Figure below). European governments are invited to become involved in the governance of the EQAR association and as Governmental Members.
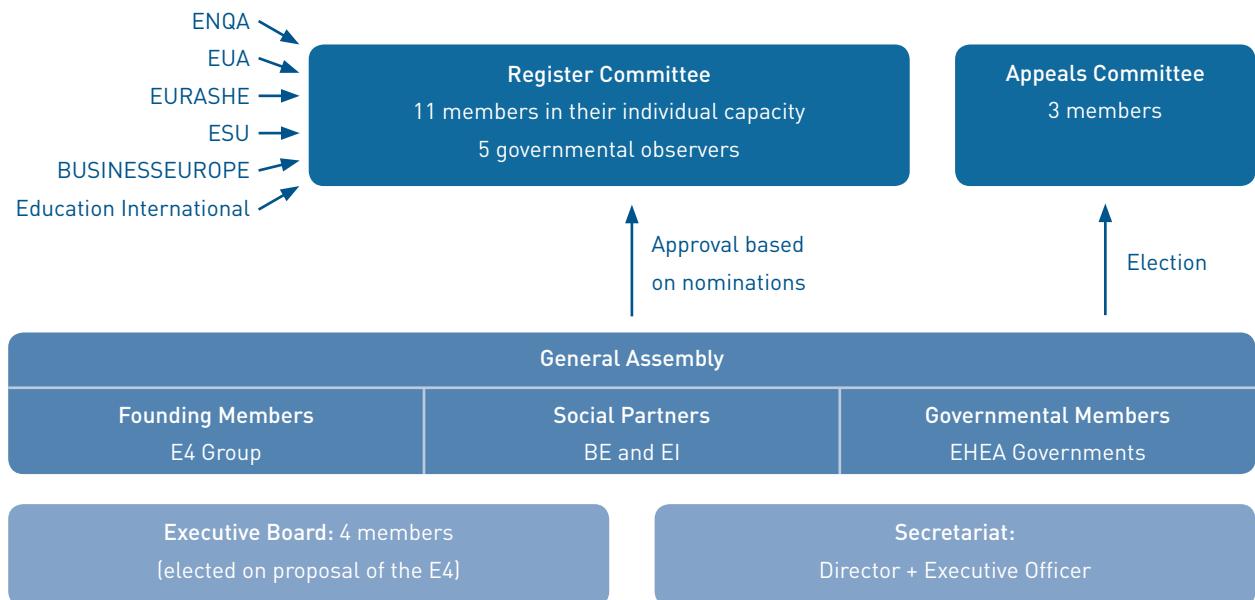
Figure: Structure of EQAR

The General Assembly, comprised of all members, is the supreme decision-making body of EQAR. It decides on the budget, approves the accounts, elects the Executive Board and Appeals Committee, approves the Register Committee and discusses any matters of major importance for the Association as a whole.

The European Commission, the Bologna Secretariat, the Council of Europe and UNESCO-CEPES participate in its meetings as observers.

The voting system of the General Assembly ensures that most decisions require a majority of both the Governmental Members and the Non-Governmental Members (i.e., Founding and Social Partner Members).

The Executive Board is in charge of the management of EQAR as an association, including administrative and financial matters and strategic coordination.

The Executive Board comprises of five members: one from each Founding Member and the Chair of the Register Committee as an ex officio member without voting rights.

The functions of President, two Vice-Presidents and Treasurer rotate annually amongst the Board's voting members. The Register Committee has the exclusive responsibility to decide on applications for inclusion on the Register. It exercises this responsibility independently; its decisions do not require approval or ratification by another body.

Register Committee

The Register Committee comprises eleven members. Ten individuals with expertise in quality assurance are nominated by ENQA, ESU, EUA, EURASHE (2 nominees each), BUSINESSEUROPE and Education International (1 nominee each). The chair is elected by the nominated members and co-opted onto the Register Committee as its eleventh member.

The Register Committee members are nominated as experts acting in their individual capacity, and not as representatives of the nominating organisations. Nominees may not currently hold a representative function or be a staff member of the nominating organisation.

Five governments are nominated by the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) as observers on the Register Committee.

Possible appeals against a decision of the Register Committee will be considered and decided by the Appeals Committee, comprising of 3 members and 3 deputies. They are elected by the General Assembly for a mandate of four years and may not serve on any other body of EQAR.

The Secretariat is in charge of the daily management and operation of EQAR. It supports all other bodies in their work, ensures the information exchange between different bodies and serves as contact point for external enquiries.

3. List of EQAR members as of 31/12/10

/ ENQA, European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
/ ESU, European Students' Union (formerly ESIB)
/ EUA, European University Association
/ EURASHE, European Association of Institutions in Higher Education

Social Partner Members
/ BUSINESSEUROPE
/ Education International

Governmental Members
/ Armenia
Ministry of Education and Science
/ Austria
Federal Ministry of Science and Research
/ Belgium (Flemish community)
Flemish Department of Education and Training
/ Belgium (French-speaking community)
Direction générale de l'Enseignement non obligatoire et de la Recherche scientifique
/ Bosnia and Herzegovina
Ministry of Civil Affairs
/ Bulgaria
Ministry of Education and Science
/ Cyprus
Ministry of Education and Culture
/ Denmark
Danish University and Property Agency / Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation

/ Estonia
Ministry of Education and Research
/ France
Ministry of Higher Education and Research
/ Georgia
Ministry of Education and Science
/ Germany
Federal Ministry of Education and Research / Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany
/ Hungary
Ministry of Education and Culture
/ Ireland
Department of Education and Science
/ Poland
Ministry of Science and Higher Education
/ Liechtenstein
Office of Education
/ Luxembourg
Ministry of Culture, Higher Education and Research
/ Malta
Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family
/ the Netherlands
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
/ Norway
Ministry of Education and Research
/ Portugal
Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education
/ Romania
Ministry of Education, Research and Youth
/ Slovenia (joined in 2009)
Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Technology
/ Spain
Ministry of Education and Science

/ Switzerland (joined in 2009)
State Secretariat for Education and Research
/ Ukraine
Ministry of Education and Science

4. Composition of EQAR bodies

Register Committee

Chair:
/ Kjell Frønsdal (Bergen, Norway) – since 1 July 2010
Judge of the Gulating Court of Appeal in Bergen, Norway
/ Bryan McMahon, (Dublin, Ireland) – until 30 June 2010
Judge of the High Court of Ireland

Vice-Chair:
/ Lucien Bollaert (Kortrijk, Belgium)
Member of the Executive Board, Accreditation
Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO)

Members:
/ Christoph Anz (München, Germany)
Head of Education Policy Unit, BMW Group
/ Gintautas Bražiunas (Vilnius, Lithuania) – until June 2010
Managing Director, Vilnius College of Higher Education
/ Gertie De Fraeye (Ghent, Belgium) – since July 2010
Master student in law and student representative and
vice-chair of the council for higher education in the
Flemish Education Council
/ Henrik Toft Jensen (Roskilde, Denmark)
Former rector, Roskilde University
/ Dáire Keogh (Dublin, Ireland)
Vice-President, Irish Federation of University Teachers
(IFUT)

/ Dorte Kristoffersen (San Francisco, USA))
Vice President for Policy and Research of the
Accreditation Commission for Community and
Junior Colleges (ACCJC) under the Western Association
of Schools and Colleges (WASC)
/ Mindaugas Misiunas (Vilnius, Lithuania) – since July 2010
Director, Kauno kolegija (University of Applied Sciences),
Vilnius College of Higher Education
/ Júlio Pedrosa (Aveiro, Portugal)
Senior Researcher, Ciceco – Centre for Research in
Ceramics and Composite Materials
/ Mala Singh (Milton Keynes, United Kingdom)
Professor of International Higher Education Policy,
Centre for Higher Education Research and Information,
Open University
/ Tanel Sits (Tallinn, Estonia)
Educational Policy Officer, Federation of Estonian
Student Unions (EÜL)
/ Regina Weber (Berlin, Germany) – until June 2010
Former member of the Executive Board of the National
Union of Students in Germany (fzs)

Observers:
/ Austria – until June 2010
/ Estonia – until June 2010
/ Ireland – until June 2010
/ Portugal – until June 2010
/ Denmark
/ Czech Republic – since July 2010
/ Greece – since July 2010
/ Slovenia – since July 2010
/ Turkey – since July 2010

Executive Board

President:

/ Andreas Orphanides (Nicosia, Cyprus)
Vice-President, European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE)
(from March 2010, Vice-President until March 2010)
/ Bruno Carapinha (Lisbon, Portugal)
Former member of the Executive Committee, European Students' Union (ESU)
(until March 2010)

Vice-Presidents:

/ Emmi Helle (Helsinki, Finland)
Secretary General, European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)
/ Lesley Wilson (Brussels, Belgium)
Secretary General, European University Association (EUA)
(from March 2010, treasurer until March 2010)

Treasurer:

/ Andrea Blättler (Lucerne, Switzerland)
Member of the Executive Committee of the European Students Union (ESU)
(from March 2010)

Ex-officio:

/ Bryan McMahon (Dublin, Ireland)
Chair of the EQAR Register Committee
(until July 2010)
/ Kjell Frønsdal (Bergen, Norway)
Chair of the EQAR Register Committee
 (from July 2010)

Appeals Committee

Chair:

/ Jürgen Kohler (Greifswald, Germany)
Former Chair of the German Accreditation Council

Members:

/ Ossi V. Lindqvist (Kuopio, Finland)
Former Chair of the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEEC)
/ Stephan Neetens (Brussels, Belgium)
Lawyer, Brussels Office of DLA Piper

Deputy chair:

/ Thierry Malan (Paris, France)
Former General Inspector, Inspectorate for Education and Research

Deputy members:

/ Geri Bonhof (Utrecht, the Netherlands)
President of the Executive Board, Hogeschool Utrecht – University of Applied Sciences
/ Inge Jonsson (Stockholm, Sweden)
Former Rector of Stockholm University

Secretariat

Director:
/ Colin Tück

Executive Officer:
/ Annelies Traas

5. Registered Quality Assurance Agencies – as of 31 December 2010 –

The following agencies were included on the register as of 31/12/2010. Agencies are included for five years counting from the date of their external review, the duration of inclusion is indicated in the table for each agency. Further information on these agencies and the external review reports on which EQAR's decision are based can be obtained from:

http://www.eqar.eu/register.html

Name:	Included since:	Inclusion until:
ACQUIN – Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute (Germany)	15/4/2009	31/5/2011
ACSUCYL – Quality Assurance Agency for the University System of Castilla y León (Spain)	18/11/2010	31/12/2014
ACSUG – Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University System (Spain)	18/11/2010	31/07/2014
AGAE – Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Research of Andalucía (Spain)	7/10/2009	31/1/2014
AHPGS – Accreditation Agency for Study Programmes in Health and Social Sciences AHPGS (Germany)	7/10/2009	31/3/2014
ANECA – National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain	5/12/2008	30/6/2012
AQA – Austrian Agency for Quality Assurance	7/10/2009	30/11/2012
AQAS - Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes (Germany)	25/05/2010	28/02/2012

AQU – Agency for Quality Assurance in the Catalan University System (Spain)	5/12/2008	31/8/2012
ARACIS – Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education	7/10/2009	31/3/2014
ASIIN – Akkreditierungsagentur für Studiengänge der Ingenieur-wissenschaften, der Informatik, der Mathematik und der Naturwissenschaften (Germany)	15/4/2009	31/5/2011
CTI – Engineering Degree Commission (France)	18/11/2010	30/04/2014
evalag – Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg (Germany)	25/05/2010	30/09/2014
FIBAA – Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (Germany)	15/4/2009	29/2/2012
FINHEEC - Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (KKA)	18/11/2010	31/07/2015
HETAC – Higher Education and Training Awards Council (Ireland)	7/10/2009	30/9/2011
IUQB – Irish Universities Quality Board	7/10/2009	30/9/2013
NEAA – National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency (Bulgaria)	7/10/2009	31/7/2013
NVAO – Accreditation Organization of The Netherlands and Flanders	5/12/2008	30/9/2012

PKA – State Accreditation Commission (Poland)	15/4/2009	31/12/2013
The Accreditation Institution (Denmark)	18/11/2010	31/08/2015
VLHORA – Flemish Council of University Colleges (Belgium)	15/4/2009	31/10/2013
VLIR-QAU – Flemish Interuniversity Council, Quality Assurance Unit (Belgium)	7/10/2009	31/5/2014
ZEvA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency (Germany)	15/4/2009	31/5/2011

6. Recommendations for External Reviews
(September 2010)

The following recommendations have been drawn from 'good practice' evident in the applications considered by the Register Committee. These recommendations aim to be useful to all those involved in the external review of quality assurance agencies, and the Register Committee invites them to take these recommendations into account.

The recommendations express what the Register Committee has considered helpful in making a judgement on an agency's compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG). Their aim is to promote the development of clear and comprehensive external review reports that form a reliable basis for fair and consistent decision-making on applications.

The recommendations do not aim to be exhaustive. External reviews of quality assurance agencies frequently have additional, other purposes than assessing compliance with the ESG and serving as a basis for inclusion on EQAR, and these additional purposes may require other features.

The recommendations should be seen as good practice which might require adaptation depending on the profile and context of the individual agency under review. They should not narrow the room for different approaches and methodologies to give effect to the ESG.

1. While the review might have various purposes, it should be clear that evaluating the extent to which the agency complies with the ESG is one of the review's purposes. The ESG should be clearly mentioned as a reference point of the review.

2. Where an agency also performs activities that might not be considered external quality assurance in the sense of the ESG, this should be pointed out in the review report. In order to enhance transparency the review report should specify all activities which were not considered "ESG-relevant" by the panel and thus were disregarded in the review.

3. Where an agency operates in several countries, the review report should normally address the agency's activities in all countries, and not be limited to its "home" country. For the sake of clarity the review report should specify which activities in which countries the panel took into account, and if any were disregarded for specific reasons.

4. The review report should explicitly address all standards of parts 2 and 3 of the ESG. It benefits readability and comprehensibility if the report contains for each standard:

/ A summary of the evidence reviewed
/ A weighing analysis of the agencies' activities in the light of the standard
/ An argued conclusion as to the agency's substantial compliance with the standard

For those standards that refer to activities rather than organisational aspects (ESG 2.1 to 2.7 and ESG 3.7), the report should address each activity/quality assurance scheme separately.

5. If an agency is already registered on EQAR, it should ensure that the review panel is informed of the matters flagged in the acceptance letter. These should be addressed in the review report.

These recommendations should be considered in conjunction with and in addition to the mandatory requirements for external reviews, as set out in the Procedures for Applications:

/ The review has to be coordinated by an organisation that is independent of the applicant. The coordinator has the responsibility to appoint an independent review panel. (see Art. 5)
/ The review panel has to include at least four persons who possess sufficient knowledge, experience and expertise. The panel has to include at least one academic staff member, one student and one international member. (see Art. 6)
/ The self-evaluation report has to be a critical self-reflection on the applicant's compliance with the ESG. (see Art. 7)
/ The review report has to be agreed by all panel members. It has to provide sufficient evidence for substantial compliance with the ESG. (see Art. 8)

References for further information:
/ Guide for Applicants (Version 2.1 of January 2010)
http://www.eqar.eu/fileadmin/documents/EQAR_GuideForApplicants_current-version.pdf
/ Procedures for Applications (adopted 6 August 2008)
http://www.eqar.eu/fileadmin/documents/eqar/official/RC_01_1_ProceduresForApplications_v1_0.pdf