



ANNUAL
REPORT

2017



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

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Dear readers,

The whole EQAR community – members, committees, partners and staff –, look back at the year 2017 with great satisfaction. Most important is the impression that the attention to quality assurance increased: several countries started with new initiatives or developed new systems, trying to better serve the interests of higher education institutions and society. This is catalyzed by the revised version of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), agreed upon by the ministers responsible for higher education during the ministerial conference in Yerevan in 2015. The ESG 2015 give more clear guidance to the Higher Education systems and have already been implemented in many legal systems.

In September we received the joyful message that the Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR) project was positively evaluated and selected for EU co-funding. Consequently, EQAR increased its Secretariat staff and kicked off the project in November. The project partners are QA agencies covering ca. 75% of the activities by EQAR-registered agencies, the key European stakeholder organisations and Ghent University as a research partner.

The Register Committee had an active and intense year. During the spring meeting in Valencia we said farewell to a number of people who have formed the Register Committee over the years: Eric Froment shaped the work of EQAR as the Committee's chair for the past five years, Lucien Bollaert, Dorte Kristoffersen, Júlio Pedrosa and Dáire Keogh had served on the Committee since the very first term. These outgoing members did an outstanding job: back in 2008, they started the implementation of the Register from scratch. Through their commitment, they ensured transparency and consistency, and gave the Register its trusted

and respected position. Almost an entirely new Committee took over at the autumn meeting in Cologne. They will work in the same spirit and with the same attitude, as we have already seen during the first meetings.

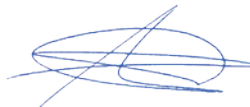
At the end of the year 2017, 38 countries were governmental members and 45 quality assurance agencies were registered on EQAR. It is our sincere wish to convince the remaining 10 countries to become governmental members as well.

The EQAR Members' Dialogue is an excellent opportunity to discuss developments in quality assurance, both on European and national level, with our members. The Members' Dialogue 2017 confirmed the keen interest of member countries to share their challenges and possible solutions.

Let me end with a personal note: in my first year as the President of EQAR, I have become very impressed by the expertise, commitment and experience of the EQAR staff. Besides that, I have enjoyed working with the experienced and well-prepared colleagues on the Executive Board, the General Assembly and the Register Committee. We share the same values and know why we are dedicated to our work: it is because of the quality of the (higher) education and thus for the development of our students, our universities and our societies. They all benefit and we definitely want to continue serving them.

I hope you will enjoy reading this Annual Report and that it will give you a good impression of the work of EQAR in 2017.

Karl Dittrich
President



1.1 Decisions on Inclusion and Renewal of Registration

During 2017, the Register Committee admitted three quality assurance agencies to the Register, having concluded that they demonstrated their substantial compliance with the ESG through an external review: National Centre for Professional Education Quality (ANQA, Armenia), Independent Kazakh Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (IQAA) and Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR, Kazakhstan).

One application for inclusion on the Register was rejected due to non-eligibility, while two applications were deferred pending additional representation on the reasons for a possible rejection (final decisions are to be made in 2018).

The Register Committee considered 12 applications for renewal, and renewed the registration of 10 agencies. While one of the decisions to reject renewal of registration is final, the other one remains subject to appeal and is thus not final.

The full decisions can be consulted at:

<https://www.eqar.eu/register/decisions/>

Considering the compliance level with each standard (see Table 2), the Register Committee was unable to conclude compliance in more than half of the applications considered (9 of 15) for the standard 2.7 Complaints and appeals. Other areas where the Register Committee found frequent shortcomings and concluded that some agencies complied only partially were: 3.4 Thematic analysis and 2.6 Reporting (in 6 out of 15 applications), 2.5 Criteria for outcomes (5 out of 15 applications) and 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance (4 out of 15 applications).

Many agencies seemed to have difficulties in complying with standards that have been newly introduced (ESG 2.7) or that undoubtedly have become more demanding in the ESG 2015 compared to the ESG 2005 (i.e. the requirement to publish full reports – ESG 2.6; the regular preparation and publication of reports that analyse the general findings of the agency's external QA – ESG 3.4).

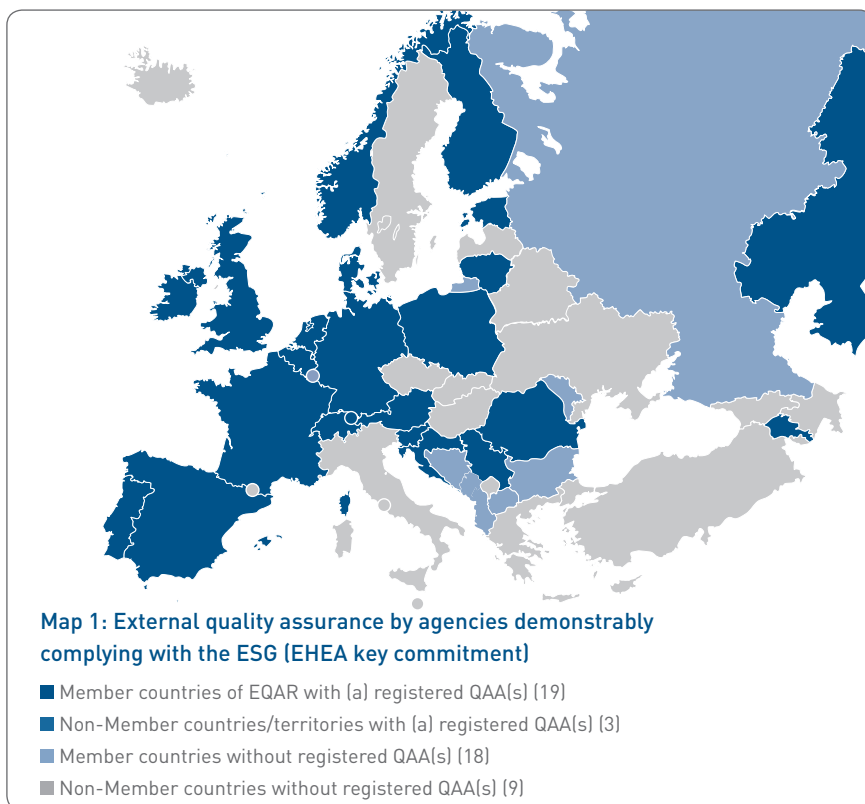
In the case of ESG 2.5, however, despite not being a new standard, agencies had difficulties complying with the standard due to inconsistencies in the application of criteria or a lack of transparency in their published criteria for outcomes or judgments.

Four of the fifteen agencies had challenges related to stakeholder involvement in the governance and work of the agencies

Table 1: Overview Applications in 2017

A	Initial Applications	6
B	Approved	3
C	Withdrawn	0
D	Rejected	1
E	Pending	2
F	Renewal Applications	12
G	Approved	10
H	Withdrawn	0
I	Rejected	2
J	Appeals	0
K	Successful	0
L	Unsuccessful	0
M	Registration ended/ expired	0
N	Registered	46

(see <http://www.eqar.eu/register/former-entries.html>)



or with regard to the clear separation between their external QA and other fields of work (ESG 3.1). While the ESG 2005 did not include an explicit definition of stakeholders, ESG 2015 defines the term as 'all actors within an institution, including students and staff, as well as external stakeholders such as employers and external partners of an institution'. Some agencies, however, had a more narrow interpretation of stakeholder involvement.

The clear and transparent separation between activities within and outside the scope of the ESG, to avoid confusion or prevent conflict of interest, has sometimes not been sufficiently addressed by agencies or review panels. In this respect, the Policy on the Use and Interpretation of the ESG has been amended

Table 2: Level of Compliance by Standard in Applications (2017)

ESG	Compliance	Partial c.	ESG	Compliance	Partial c.new
2.1 Consideration of internal QA	14	1	3.1 Activities, policy and processes for QA	11	4
2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose	13	2	3.2 Official status	15	0
2.3 Implementing processes	12	3	3.3 Independence	13	2
2.4 Peer-review experts	13	2	3.4 Thematic analysis	9	6
2.5 Criteria for outcomes	10	5	3.5 Resources	14	1
2.6 Reporting	9	6	3.6 Internal QA and professional conduct	14	1
2.7 Complaints and appeals	6	9	3.7 Cyclical external review	15	

with guiding principles that would assist agencies to address this matter (see more information under 1.3 below).

1.2 Monitoring of Registered Agencies

Substantive Change Reports

The Register Committee considered change reports from five registered agencies in 2017. The number of change reports recorded a significant drop from the previous year, when 14 agencies submitted such reports. The main reason for the decrease is that earlier reports covered adjustments made following the transition to the ESG 2015, which have now become less frequent. Another reason is that agencies have reported such changes in their application for renewal of registration, and such applications have almost doubled in 2017 compared to the previous year.

The Register Committee decided to take note of the information provided in four of the five change reports. One last report has been put on hold since an extraordinary revision of the same agency's registration was initiated by the Register Committee.

Most changes, as in previous years, are related to changes in the agency's external quality assurance activities (see Table 3 below).

Table 3: Substantive change reports in 2017	
Type of change	Number of registered agencies
Changes in the organisational identity	1
Changes in the organisational structure	1
New external quality assurance activities	3
Changes in existing external quality assurance activities	3
Discontinuation of existing activities	3

Complaints

In 2017 EQAR received two complaints, both related to the processes for promotion of individual academic staff. As the complaints did not relate to the agency's external QA activities within the scope of the ESG, the Register Committee concluded they were

inadmissible and did not consider them further.

1.3 Approach to External Quality Assurance and Other Activities

EQAR registration covers activities within the scope of the ESG, i.e. external quality assurance of teaching and learning in higher education, including the learning environment and relevant links to research and innovation. The Register Committee observed that there was considerable uncertainty about two issues:

- // Which activities are within the scope of the ESG (and thus need to be in compliance with the ESG), and which activities are not?
- // What is an acceptable level of separation between external QA within the scope of the ESG and other activities?

The former question came up in more than half of the applications for inclusion/renewal of registration. While the latter question did not arise as often, it came up especially in those cases where agencies also offer consultancy services in relation to quality of teaching and learning in higher education, or other activities that have a potential for conflicts of interest in combination with external QA.

In order to provide a clear and consistent response, the Register Committee produced a draft policy for consultation,



EQAR Register Committee, hosted by the University of Valencia, June 2017

based on the Committee's experience acquired from dealing with the broad range of activities actually performed by the registered agencies. The Committee sought feedback from governmental and stakeholder members, as well as from the registered quality assurance agencies.

Following the consultation process, the Committee adopted a number of additions to the Policy on the Use and Interpretation of the ESG, clarifying the scope of the ESG for the purpose of registration on EQAR, and adding a new annex with guiding principles for the clear separation between external quality assurance and other activities.

Policy on the Use and Interpretation of the ESG (Version 2.0 - November 2017)

1.4 Overarching Analysis of Decisions

At the end of 2017, EQAR carried out a first overarching analysis of the Register Committee's decisions that were made based on the ESG 2015. The continuous increase in the number of applications (both initial and renewal of registration) shows that EQAR registration continues to serve as a standard for quality assurance agencies and their compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. The robustness of procedures are also visible in the low number of appeals (two appeals resulting from the 12 rejected / withdrawn applications).

The most challenging standards for QA agencies (partial compliance in more than 25% of cases) were related to Appeals procedures (2.7), Thematic analyses (3.4), Reporting (2.6), Criteria for outcomes (2.5), Involvement of stakeholders/separation between QA and other activities (3.1).

Generally, the Register Committee followed the conclusions of the panel for most of the standards, although a number of differences were observed for specific instances i.e. ESG 2.3, ESG 2.6, ESG 2.7 and ESG 3.1. In cases where the Register Committee conclusion on the standard differed to that of the panel, the Committee usually sought clarifications from the chair of the review panel to inform its judgement.

Given the fact that the ESG 2015 are still relatively new, such differences of conclusions on these standards should not be considered unusual. It could be expected that they reduce over time, also following the regular communication with the review coordinators and EQAR's contribution to the training of review panel members before an external review.

Review reports have also revealed situations where the existing legal framework made it difficult for agencies to comply with the ESG (i.e. ESG 2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose, ESG 2.6 Reporting, ESG 2.7 Complaints and

Appeals, ESG 3.3 Independence).

Public authorities should in such cases adapt the legal frameworks, so as to ensure that legislation is not a barrier to implementing the ESG and, thus, that QA agencies can meet the expectations of compliance for EQAR-registration.

Analysis of Register Committee Decisions 2015 – 2017

1.5 Communication with review coordinators

EQAR maintained an ongoing active dialogue with all coordinators of external reviews used for applications for inclusion on the Register. Most reviews were coordinated by ENQA or the German Accreditation Council (GAC).



EQAR Register Committee, hosted by the University of Applied Sciences in Cologne, November 2017

Due to changes in the national quality assurance system, GAC will no longer coordinate external reviews of agencies.

Numerous exchanges at working level took place with ENQA throughout 2017. In addition, an official meeting between the EQAR Register Committee and the ENQA Board was held in January 2017. EQAR further contributed to ENQA's annual seminar for reviewers.

2.1 Registered Agencies' External Quality Assurance Activities

For the past four years, EQAR has been collecting information about the volume of external QA activities (evaluation, accreditation, audit) of its registered agencies through an annual survey.

In the past four years, EQAR registered agencies carried out 38 805 external QA activities in 87 higher education systems. In 55 of these systems, QA agencies carried out external QA at institutional level and in 73 of higher education systems it was carried out at programme level.

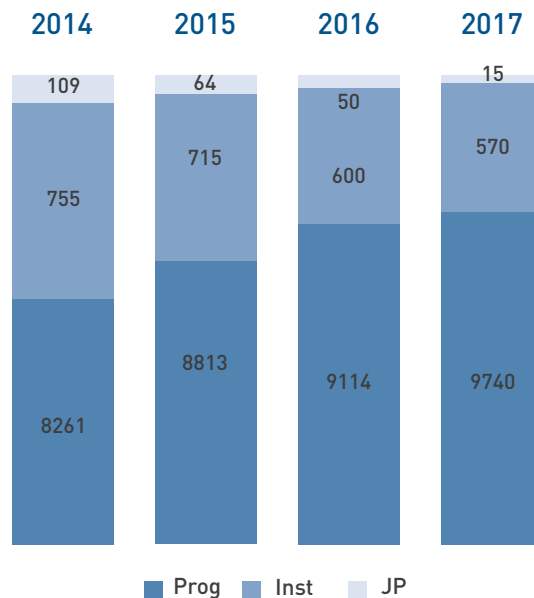
In 2017, external QA activities were spread across 65 higher education systems, of which 39 within the EHEA. The number of external QA activities continued to increase overall, along with the increase in the number of registered QA agencies. The 45 EQAR-registered agencies carried out a total of 10 350 external QA activities in 2017, a 5% increase compared to 2016, 7% increase compared to 2015 and 11% increase compared to 2014. Despite this general increase, a decrease was registered in 2017 at institutional and joint programme level (see Figure 1 & Figure 2).

As in previous years, the highest number of external QA activities were carried out by agencies that have a national or regional focus and carry out programme-level accreditations and evaluations. 51% of the total number of reviews were carried out by six of the 45 registered QA agencies i.e. HCERES, ANECA, CAQA, A3ES, AAC-DEVA, fmid.

The volume of external QA activities has seen large fluctuations from 2016 to 2017 in some agencies. Compared to 2016, six agencies (FIBAA, AAC, BAC, ANECA, AAQ and MusiQuE) had increased the number of external QA activities carried out by at

least 50%, while seven have registered a drop of at least 50% (VL-UHR QAU, ACQUIN, Unibasq, CTI, ZeVA, AQU and NOKUT). While yearly changes in the volume of external QA activities of agencies are common, a few agencies have recorded a continuous decrease for the past four years (NOKUT, QAA) or a continuous increase (ASHE, BAC, FINEEC, SQAA).

Figure 1: Overview of registered agencies' activities by type 2014 – 2017



2.2 Implementation of the ESG 2015

EQAR contributed to supporting and promoting the use of the ESG 2015 at grass-root level as one of the partners of the Enhancing Quality through Innovative Policy & Practice (EQUIP) project.



Members' Dialogue/EQUIP focus group, hosted by the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

In October 2017, EQAR organised an EQUIP (Enhancing Quality through Innovative Policy & Practice) focus group in conjunction with the 7th EQAR Members' Dialogue. The focus group featured group discussions on the challenges that arise in the implementation by national authorities of the ESG 2015 and possible ways to address these challenges. The discussions were used to test and refine the project conclusions, and fed into the EQUIP final study.

The EQUIP project is expected to conclude in early 2018 with the presentation of its study findings and policy recommendations.

2.3 Contribution to the EHEA Working Structures

EQAR has been a member of the Bologna Follow-Up Group's (BFUG) **Working Group on Monitoring** (WG1) since 2009. The group's task is to observe and report on the current state of implementation of the Bologna Process.

In 2017, the group's work mostly focused on defining the scorecards and the new indicators that will be included in the implementation reports. EQAR provided feedback to the scorecards related to quality assurance and reflections on the draft implementation report, referring specifically to the chapter on Quality Assurance and Recognition.

As a member of the BFUG **Working Group on Implementation** (WG2) EQAR contributed to the drafting of the quality assurance chapter of the group's final report. The input was largely based on the group's thematic session on internationalisation of quality assurance, which took place in late 2016 and was jointly prepared by ENQA and EQAR.

EQAR is part of the BFUG (AG3), addressing the challenge of non-implementation or incorrect implementation of key commitments. EQAR contributed to the group's work in defining the EHEA's key commitment on quality assurance in conformity with the ESG, in advising on the state of implementation of that commitment across the EHEA, and in preparing the proposals for a new approach to facilitating the implementation of EHEA key commitments.

Further information on the EHEA work programme

2.4 Developments in Cross-Border QA

Registered agencies' activities

During the past four years, 30 EQAR-registered agencies carried out at least one review in a country other than their home country. They conducted 1099 external QA activities in 83 higher education systems, of which 78% at programme level, 20% at institutional level and 2% at joint programme level. The most active QA agencies across borders in absolute terms were ACQUIN, FIBAA, CTI and ASIIN, each carrying out over 100 evaluations abroad. In relative terms and in addition to EAPAA, IEP and MusiQuE, who are international agencies by nature and thus all their activities are "across borders", also AQ Austria, BAC and evalag carry out 20% or more of their activities across borders.

In 2017, approximately half of EQAR registered QA agencies (22 of the 45) carried out cross-border external quality assurance activities, showing similar trends to previous years. While the number of cross-border external QA has decreased compared to 2016, from 331 to 268 (see Figure 2), the spread of cross-border QA activities has increased from 37 to 52 higher education systems.

Home country reviews remain, as in previous years, the primary focus of national or regional QA agencies. On average, 6% of their external QA activities were across borders, while 94% were carried out in the home country of the registered QA agency. More than half of the cross-border external QA activities in 2017 were carried out by only 5 of the 22 QA agencies active across borders ([MusiQuE](#), [FIBAA](#), [CTI](#), [ASIIN](#) and [AHPGS](#), see [Figure 4](#)).

The data collected in the past four years shows that most cross-border external QA activities are carried out in EHEA countries that recognise the activity of EQAR-registered agencies as part of the regular quality assurance at programme and/or institutional level (e.g. Kazakhstan, Belgium, Moldova, Austria, Romania,

Cyprus, Germany, Switzerland, Lithuania). Nevertheless, cross-border QA also takes place in countries where such recognition does not exist (e.g. Russia, Slovenia, Ukraine, Spain, Ireland, Turkey, France).

Legal frameworks

EQAR has continued to maintain a public knowledge base on legal frameworks for external QA and cross-border recognition of external QA activities, including the use of the European Approach for QA of Joint Programmes. The knowledge base is available on its website.

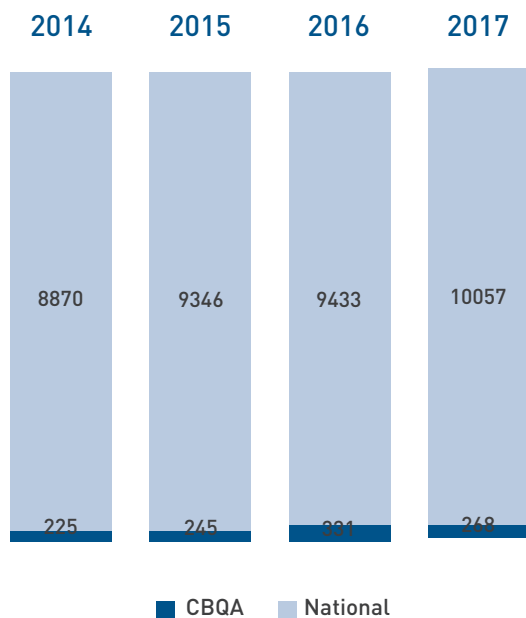
In 2017 EQAR and Eurydice jointly carried out a survey addressed to EHEA countries on the changes to their legal framework and on the openness to cross-border external quality assurance by a suitable EQAR-registered agency. The responses were used to update the country information profile on the EQAR website and fed into the work of the Monitoring Working Group, in the development of the openness scorecard ([see also 2.2](#))

The country consultations showed that the following higher education systems introduced legislation that allows their higher education institutions to choose recognised foreign or EQAR-registered QA agencies as part of the national requirements for external QA:

// Starting in 2018, higher education institutions in the French Community of Belgium can choose an EQAR-registered agency for their mandatory external quality assurance at programme level. The national QA agency AEQES, will then not duplicate the programme evaluation but will instead review the results of the existing programme evaluation, which happens in a simplified procedure if it was carried out by an EQAR-registered agency.

// In France, the criteria and procedures for external quality assurance must be validated by the national QA agency,

Figure 2: Overview of registered agencies' activities across borders



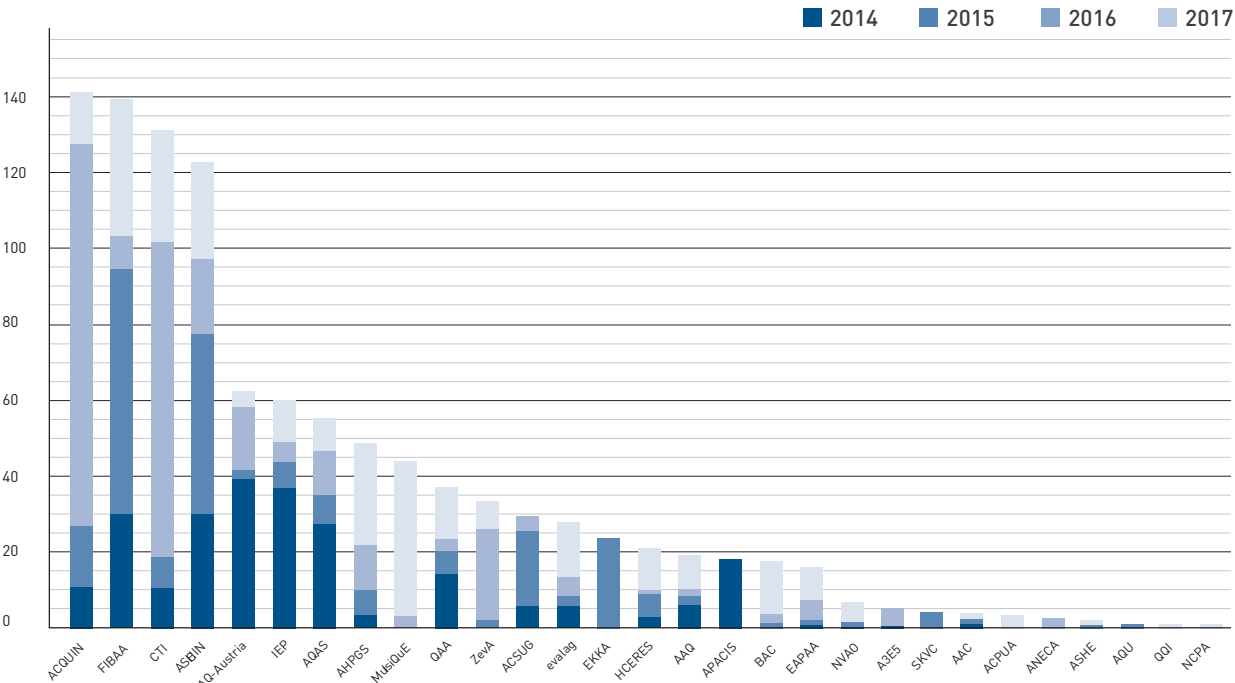
HCERES. After the review, HCERES will check if the review corresponds to the national qualifications framework and whether the foreign quality assurance agency has effectively involved students in the review.

// Quality assurance agencies operating in Malta must receive prior approval from the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE) that will check whether the agency has the capacity and experience as well the ability to carry out the external quality assurance in the language of the programme. Additionally the agency has to follow the national accreditation criteria in their review and submit the results of the accreditation procedure to the National Commission for Further and Higher Education, who will take the final accreditation decision.

// Under the Quality Assurance Framework for Wales, higher education institutions have to choose for their external quality assurance a quality assurance agency registered in EQAR. The agency has to demonstrate knowledge of the local context, have appropriate Welsh language knowledge and ensure their procedure respect a number of requirements concerning e.g. frequency and validity of reviews, training of the peer review team, assessment of the institution's baseline requirements for the Quality Assessment Framework for Wales, use of a set of common judgements.

While by the end of 2017, 26 of the signatory EHEA countries have put in place legislative provisions to allow (all or some) higher education institutions to request accreditation, evaluation

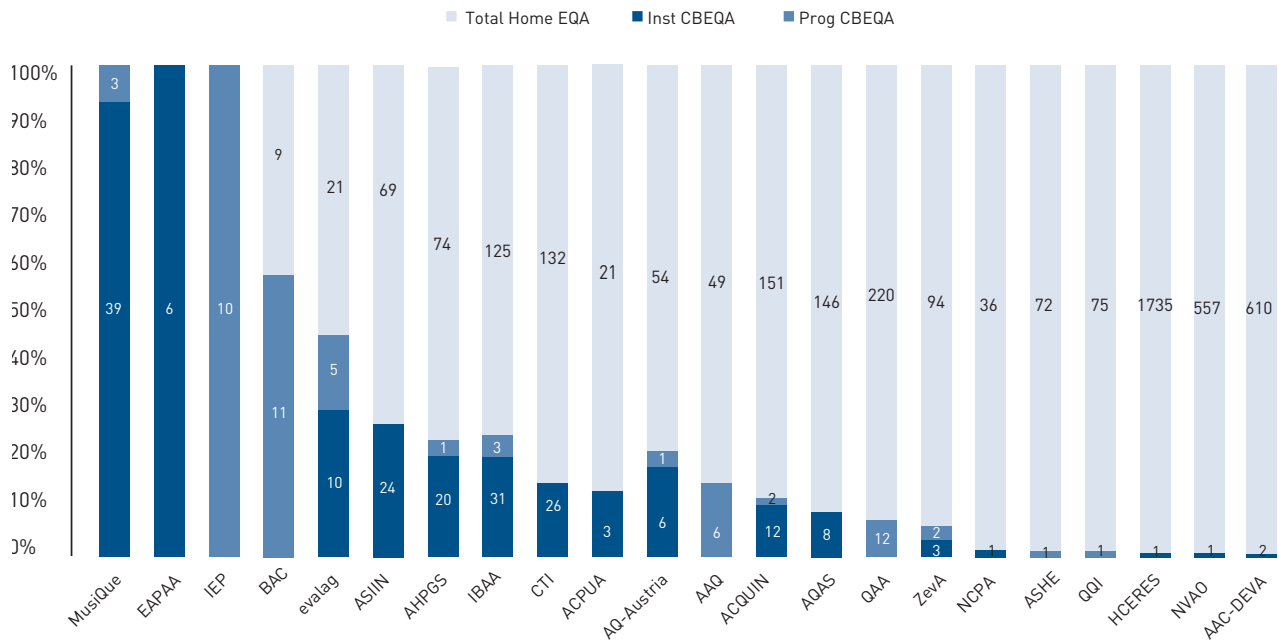
Figure 3: Volume of cross-border external quality assurance by year



or audit from a foreign quality assurance agency, only 16 countries make a specific reference to using a suitable EQAR-registered, ESG-compliant agency and thus make full use of the established European framework for quality assurance (see map below). The remaining countries have created their own, specific framework or requirements.

Knowledge base on legal frameworks

Figure 4: External quality assurance at home and cross-border by agency



2.5 European Approach for QA of Joint Programmes

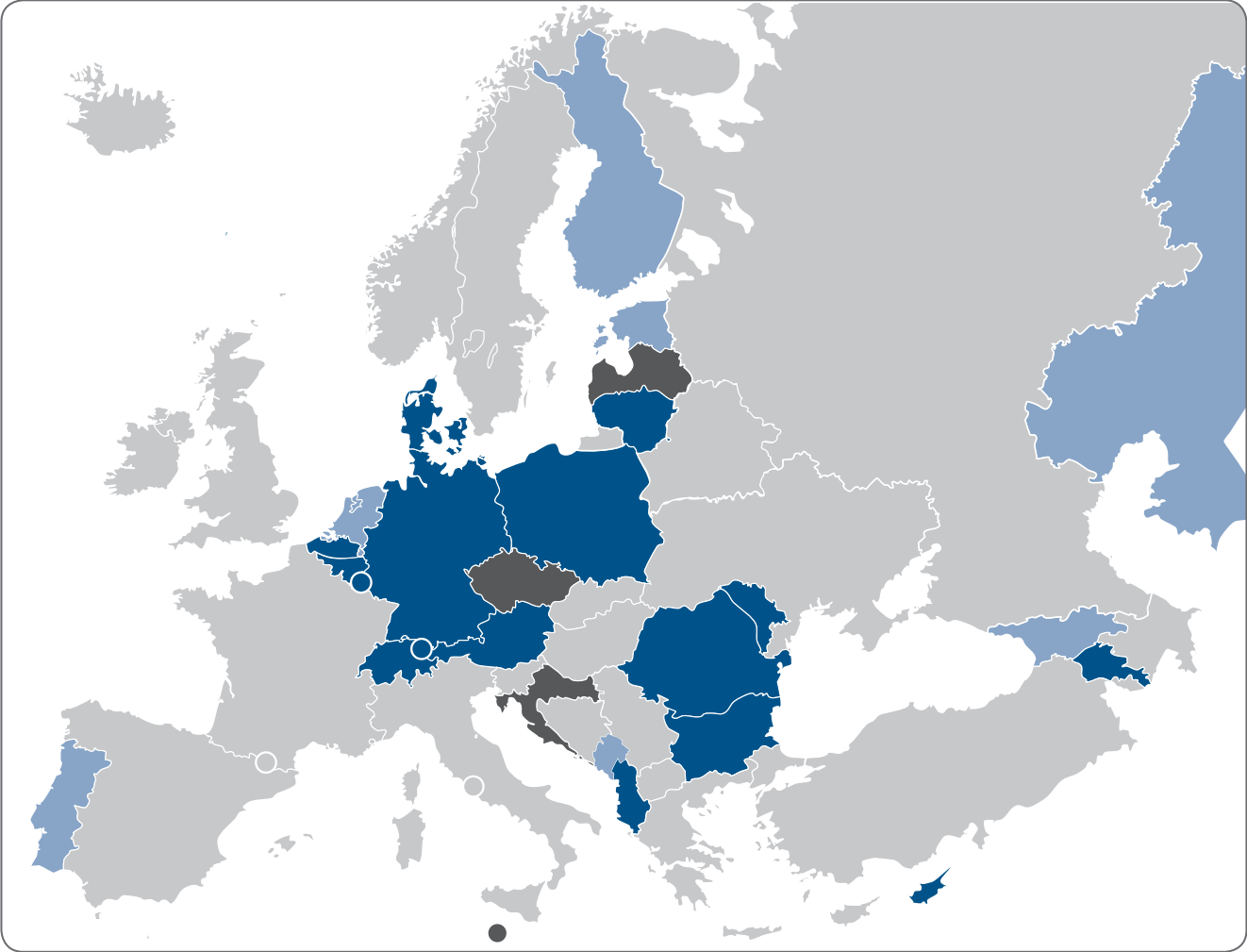
So far, the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes can only be used in a few countries with obligatory programme accreditation that have made recent legal changes or where existing legal provisions already allow its use (e.g. BE-FL, DK, DE, NL). Discussions are on-going or legislative changes are being drafted in a few additional countries (e.g. HR, SI). In a few EHEA countries (AT, FI, IE, UK) higher education institutions (some or all) do not require external program-

me level accreditation, thus they may choose to use the European Approach in their internal QA arrangements in order to “self-accredit” their programmes without a need for legislative changes.

In total, the European Approach is in principle available to all institutions in 12 higher education systems, and to some institutions in another 13 systems.

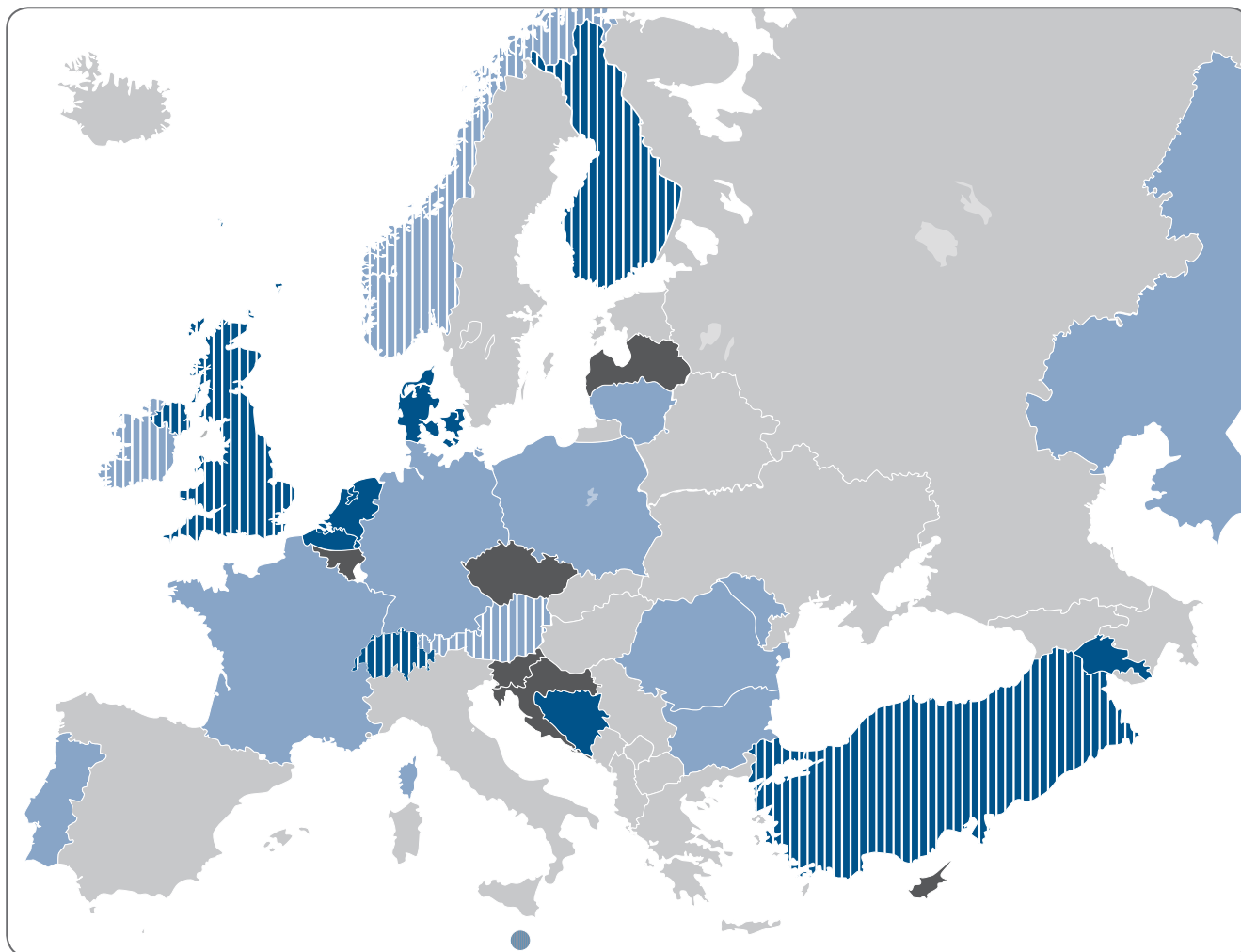
Implementation of the European Approach

Map 2: System openness to EQAR-registered QA agencies



- Countries recognising EQAR-registered agencies as part of the compulsory national external QA system
- Countries recognising foreign agencies, but not based on EQAR registration
- Countries where recognition of foreign agencies is under discussion
- Countries not open to reviews by a foreign QA agency

Map 3: Availability of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes



All higher education institutions are able to use the European Approach to satisfy the national external QA requirements:

- recognition of single external QA procedure for programmes
- HEIs being self- accrediting
- Some higher education institutions or under specific conditions
- Legislative proposals to implement the European Approach have been prepared
- European Approach cannot be used to satisfy the national external QA requirements

/// Transparency and Information Provision

3.1 Website

EQAR's website continues to be its main communication tool, with the most viewed pages the list and the map of the registered quality assurance agencies. The website further features the decisions of the Register Committee, guidance for applicant quality assurance agencies, regularly updated news items, general information on EQAR and its workings and relevant internal reports and publications.

In the autumn of 2017, EQAR contracted an external IT service provider to renew its website both technically and visually. The new website is expected to be launched in the spring of 2018.

3.2 Database of External QA Results

In May 2017, the EQAR General Assembly added the setup of the Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DE-QAR) to the EQAR Work Plan 2017/18. EQAR was awarded a grant by the European Commission under Erasmus+ Key Action 3 (European Forward-Looking Cooperation Project) for supporting the development of the database.

Objectives

The aim of the DEQAR is to allow users to identify whether a higher education

institution has been subject to external quality assurance in line with the ESG, by an EQAR-registered agency (at institutional level, or one or more of its programmes) and to easily access the corresponding quality assurance report(s).

The database is expected to satisfy broad ranges of users' information needs and support different types of decisions (e.g. recognition of degrees, mobility of students, portability of grants/loans). Improving the accessibility of the external quality assurance results, the Database could be instrumental for the (automatic) recognition of qualifications, as higher education institutions, employers and recognition information centres (ENIC NARICS) need an efficient way to establish whether a higher education institution was subject to external QA in line with the ESG.

Next to searching or browsing the database on the web, users would also be able to download the full data, including the full historic record. Registered agencies and other organisations would moreover be able to embed the database in their own websites or applications.



General Assembly in Gozo, hosted by the Maltese EU Presidency, May 2017

Partners

Coordinated by EQAR, the DEQAR project partners include 17 EQAR-registered quality assurance agencies, the German Accreditation Council (GAC) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), together representing ca. 75% of the external quality assurance reviews carried out by EQAR-registered agencies. In addition, the project includes seven stakeholder organisations in higher education (ENQA, ESU, EUA, EURASHE, Education International, CIMEA), one research centre (Ghent University) and four associate partners (registered quality assurance agencies from countries not participating in Erasmus+, ECA).

Progress so far

In October 2017, EQAR contracted an external team of IT professionals for the technical realisation of DEQAR.

The first event of the DEQAR project was a webinar for registered quality assurance agencies, which took place on 15 December 2017. The webinar gave an overview about the database project, the draft data schema, technical specifications and the methods for the data delivery.

Next steps

From early 2018, registered agencies will have the opportunity to test various methods to feed information on their QA results into DEQAR.

In March 2018, the DEQAR Data Collection and Back-End Workshop will be co-organised with the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and the German Accreditation Council (GAC).

The first public preview of the database will be available in May 2018.

[DEQAR project webpage \(information on partners, activities and timeline\)](#)

[Materials of the DEQAR Webinar](#)

3.3 Communication

Publications

The EQAR annual report 2016, including the Report by the Register Committee, was published in June 2017 and was mailed to all members of EQAR, national affiliates of EQAR's stakeholder members and other partner organisations.

In February 2017, EQAR and the E4 Group (ENQA, ESU, EUA, EURASHE) published the Key Considerations for Cross-Border Quality Assurance, a document outlining the key issues that should be taken into consideration when planning cross-border quality assurance (QA) activities.

Key Considerations for Cross-Border Quality Assurance

Newsletter and Social Media

EQAR sent out two newsletters in 2017, reaching more than 7000 recipients each. Newsletter topics included information about new agencies on the Register, relevant policy documents with regard to quality assurance, the use of EQAR in the national quality assurance frameworks of the EHEA countries, as well as organisational updates and important meeting outcomes.

EQAR also remained active on social media, including Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. EQAR reached out to up to 500 people via its Facebook page and had around 900 Twitter followers by the end of 2017.

Representation and Relations with Partners

EQAR was represented in major conferences and seminars concerned with quality assurance of higher education as well as in BFUG working structure meetings.

EQAR also had a number of bilateral meetings with members, quality assurance agencies or other interested parties, either as delegation visits to the EQAR office or visits from EQAR representatives to the organisation.

/// Organisational Development

4.1 Membership

Greece joined EQAR as Governmental Member in 2017, bringing the amount of Governmental Members involved in the overall governance of EQAR to 39. All 48 signatory countries of the Bologna Process can become Governmental Member of EQAR.

4.2 President

One key recommendation of the self-evaluation process was for EQAR to elect a President in order to raise external visibility and to enhance stability and leadership internally. Following the implementation of the necessary statutory changes and a comprehensive

selection procedure, Karl Dittrich was unanimously elected as EQAR President for a three-year mandate at the General Assembly in May 2017. The President chairs the Executive Board as well as the Register Committee, represents EQAR externally and ensures coherence in the work of the EQAR bodies.



Signing of the statutory changes at the notary's, April 2017

4.3 Statutory Bodies

At the General Assembly of 25 May 2017, EQAR members by-elected Blazhe Todorovski (ESU) to the Executive Board as replacement member for Fernando Galán Palomares, who resigned from his position, with a mandate ending after the General Assembly of 2018.

Six new Register Committee members were approved by the General Assembly for a two-year mandate starting on 1 July 2017. Incoming members Maria Arminda Bragança de Miranda, Riitta Pyykkö,

Izabela Suika, Beate Tremel, Anne Verreth and Steffen Westergaard Andersen replaced outgoing members, Josep Grifoll, Júlio Pedrosa, Olav Øye, Lucien Bollaert, Daire Keogh and Dorte Kristoffersen, these last three having served on the Register Committee since 2008.

Following the start of the mandate of Karl Dittrich as EQAR President on 1 July, the Register Committee took leave of Eric Froment, who had been Chair of the Register Committee since July 2012. The full composition of all EQAR statutory bodies as per the end of 2017 is included in [Annex 4](#).

4.4 Staff

Following the approval by the General Assembly of a budget for EQAR to establish a database of external QA results as well as the Erasmus+ grant awarded to the DEQAR (Database of External Quality Assurance Reports) project, EQAR hired a full-time staff member, Karl Viilmann, responsible for the setup and maintenance of the database. In order to handle the growing workload, the employment percentage of Annelies Traas, Event and Communications Officer, was increased by 10% to 70% of full-time. At the end of 2017, the total Secretariat staff was at 3,7 full-time equivalents (FTE).



Election of Karl Dittrich as EQAR President, May 2017

4.5 New office

EQAR moved offices to Aarlenstraat 22 Rue d'Arlon, 1050 Brussels, as from 1 October 2017. The office is sublet from the Netherlands House for Education and Research (Neth-ER). Next to a number of Dutch universities and other smaller organisations, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is another subtenant at Neth-ER.

4.5 Finances

The financial year 2017 resulted in a surplus of EUR 6 093,03. EQAR relies on a diverse funding base including annual contributions from its members (governments and European stakeholder organisations), application and listing fees paid by quality assurance agencies and occasional project grants. In 2017, EQAR received grants under the Erasmus+ programme as partner in the EQUIP project (Enhancing Quality through Innovative Policy & Practice) and as coordinator of the DEQAR (Database of External Quality Assurance Reports) project.

Table 4: Balance Sheet

Assets		Liabilities and Equity	
Fixes assets	2 066,12	Own funds	150 115,21
Guarantees	147,66	Profit/loss previous years	34 022,18
Office equipment	1 918,46	Result per 31/12/2015	6 093,03
		Reserves	110 000,00
Liquid assets	346 880,78	Liabilities	198 831,69
Receivables up to 1 year	31 567,83	Payables up to 1 year	184 113,19
Cash and term accounts	312 411,96	(thereof: pre-financing EU grants	146 734,50]
Adjustment accounts	2 900,99	Adjustment accounts	14 718,50
TOTAL	348 946,90	TOTAL	348 946,90

Table 5: Profit and Loss Account

Income		Expenditure	
Membership fees	259 065,00	Meetings and projects	63 270,99
Agency fees	62 350,00	Project direct costs	12 373,52
Other income	30 843,88	Office and administration	51 521,55
(thereof: project grant	27 329,86)	Staff	185 274,54
		Other costs	33 629,88
Operational income	352 257,88	Operational expenditure	346 070,48
Operational result	6 188,40		
Financial income	10,15	Financial costs and taxes	105,52
Total result	6 093,03		
Withdrawal from reserves	0,00	Allocation to reserves	0,00

5.1 Annexes

1. Mission Statement
2. Organisational chart
3. List of EQAR members as of 31/12/2017
4. Composition of EQAR bodies
5. Data on activities of EQAR-registered agencies in 2017
6. Overview of applications and decisions 2008 – 2017

5.2 Key documents

1. Analysis of Register Committee Decisions 2015 – 2017
2. Key Considerations for Cross-Border Quality Assurance
3. Policy on the Use and Interpretation of the ESG (version 2.0)

