

European Quality Assurance
Register for Higher Education



Taking Stock of the EHEA Key Commitment: Compliance with the ESG and limitations found within EHEA national frameworks

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Purposes of the ESG



- They set a common framework for quality assurance systems for learning and teaching at European, national and institutional level;
- They enable the assurance and improvement of quality of higher education in the European higher education area;
- They support mutual trust, thus facilitating recognition and mobility within and across national borders;
- They provide information on quality assurance in the EHEA.

ESG – common framework



Three parts, building on each other:

1) Internal quality assurance

QA of teaching and learning, e.g. design, approval of programmes, student-centred learning, ...

2) External quality assurance

Self-evaluation & peer review model, public reports, consistent use of criteria, experts incl. students, appeals

3) Quality assurance agencies

Independence, resources, professional conduct, ...

EQAR



EQAR is the European Higher Education Area's (EHEA) official register of QAAs that comply substantially with the ESG

- **Vision:** coherent quality assurance framework for the EHEA, in which
 - HEIs have freedom to turn to a suitable EQAR-registered agency
 - qualifications are universally recognised
- **Mission:**
 - enhance transparency and information on QA
 - Promote trust and recognition

EQAR Register Entry

- QA agency sample -

Admission valid until	30/09/2022 (listed since 05/12/2008)
Based in*	<u>Netherlands</u>
HE systems where agency conducted reviews**	<u>Armenia, Aruba, Belgium, Croatia, Germany, Luxemb Netherlands</u>
Reports by the agency	--

External review reports and EQAR decisions

 21/11/2017 Renewal of Registration

 21/11/2017 External Review Report

 27/05/2017 Substantive Change Report

 03/12/2012 Renewal of Registration

 26/11/2008 Admission to the Register

Information on the agency's work

NVAO is the independent and binational accreditation organisation for higher education in the Netherlands and in Flanders (the Flemish Community of Belgium). Its activities include drafting frameworks, deciding on accreditation for existing programmes, coordinating assessments and deciding on initial accreditation, institutional audits, or reviews in the Netherlands and Flanders. NVAO advises the Ministers of Education in both countries or carries out assessments related to quality assurance.



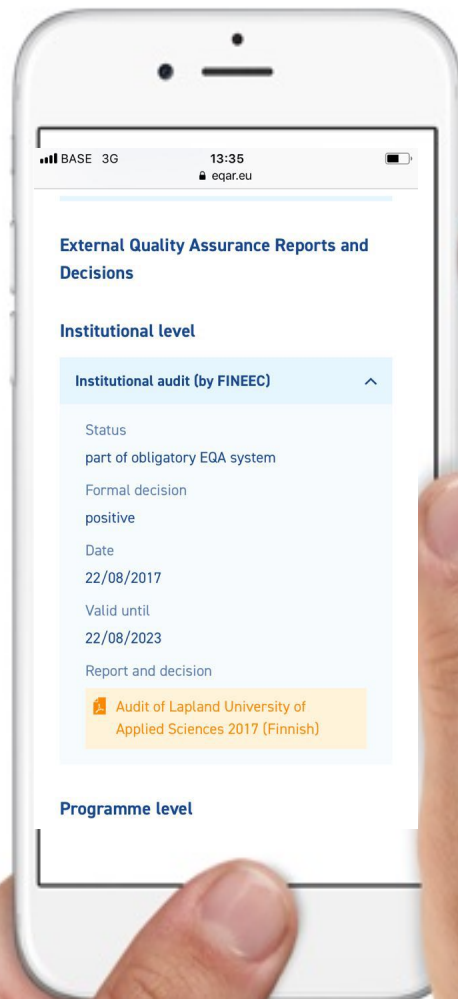
Contact details

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ENQA membership	ENQA member

Activities within the scope of ESG

- Accreditation of joint programmes
[QA RESULTS IN DEQAR](#)
- Assessments of special (quality) features for programmes and institutions in the Netherlands and Flanders
[QA RESULTS IN DEQAR](#)
- Evaluations on features of programmes
[QA RESULTS IN DEQAR](#)
- Initial programme accreditation in Flanders and the Netherlands
[QA RESULTS IN DEQAR](#)
- Institutional audits/reviews in the Netherlands and Flanders
[QA RESULTS IN DEQAR](#)
- Programme accreditation in Flanders, the Netherlands and the so called "Caribbean Netherlands"
[QA RESULTS IN DEQAR](#)
- Programme assessment in Curacao, Aruba and St. Maarten
[QA RESULTS IN DEQAR](#)

DEQAR: QA results at your fingertips



Database of External Quality Assurance Results

Search our database of QA results per country, city or institution



search

[Advanced search](#)

“Quality at your fingertips”

- Reports and decisions from external quality assurance
- Performed by EQAR-registered agencies
- In line with the ESG: based on European standards
- For various user groups

EQAR - HE system information

- country sample -



Netherlands

Netherlands has been a Governmental Member of EQAR since 2008.

National external quality assurance requirements

- Programme accreditation
- Institutional audits
voluntary
- Recognition of reviews carried out by foreign agencies:
NVAO will take the final decision of based on the result of the assessment / accreditation procedure.
Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) and the panel secretary must be trained by NVAO.
- Conditions for the agencies' work (e.g. criteria to be used):
own criteria
- Recognition of reviews carried out by foreign agencies:
NVAO will take the final decision of based on the result of the assessment / accreditation procedure.
- [Assessment Framework for higher education accreditation system Netherlands \(2016\)](#)
- [Dutch legal frameworks on external quality assurance](#)
- [Bologna National Report \(2015\)](#)

Registered agencies operating in Netherlands

- [AHPGS - Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences](#)
- [ASIIN - ASIIN e.V.](#)
- [EAEVE - European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education](#)
- [EAPAA - European Association for Public Administration Accreditation](#)
- [FIBAA - Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation](#)
- [MusiQuE - Music Quality Enhancement](#)
- [NVAO - Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders](#)
- [ZEvA - Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency](#)



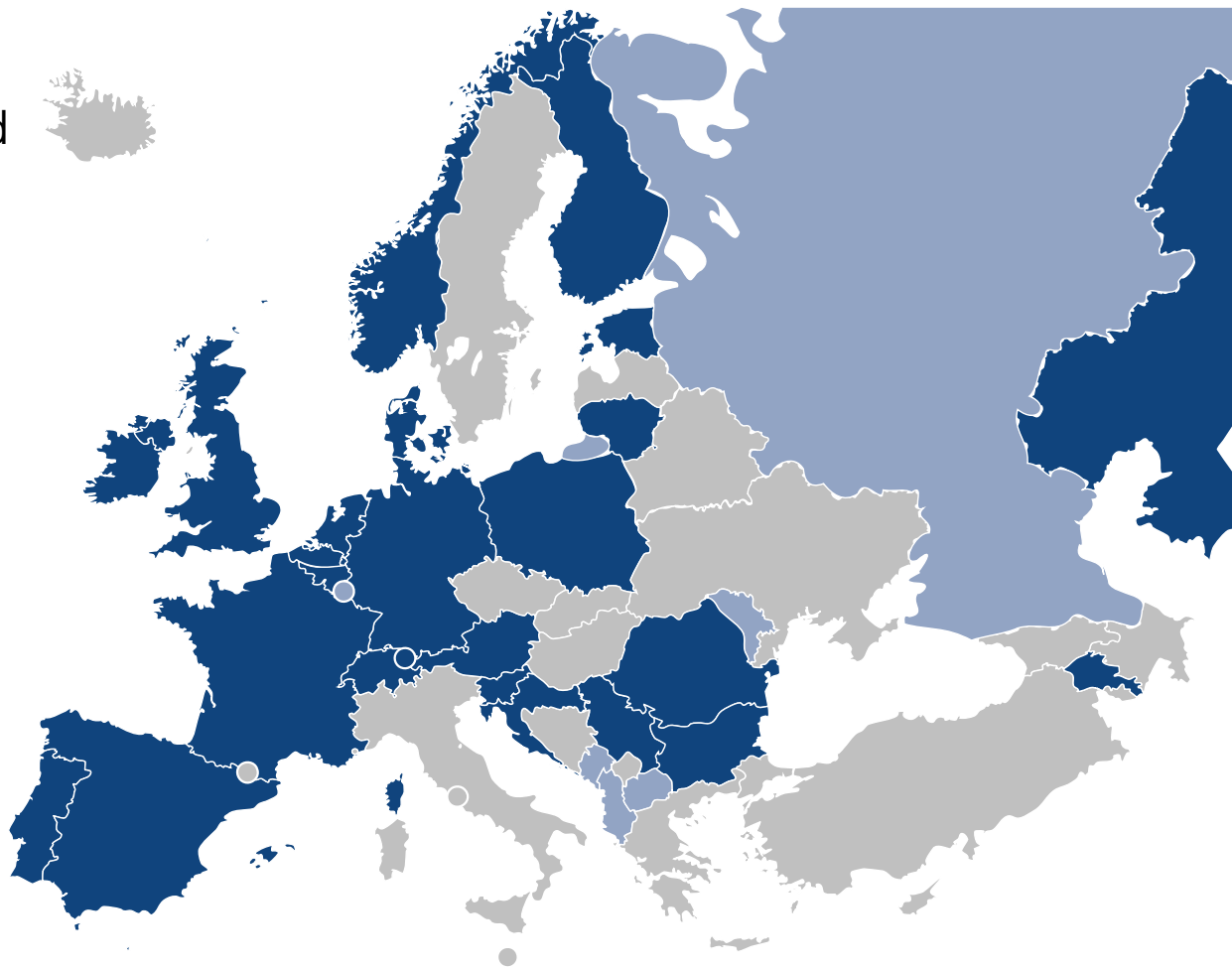
Map: EQAR Governmental Members 2018

Key Commitment on External Quality Assurance



- External QA performed by agencies that demonstrably comply with the ESG, registered on EQAR
- For some, but not all higher education institutions

September 2018:
48 registered QAAs
based in 23
countries



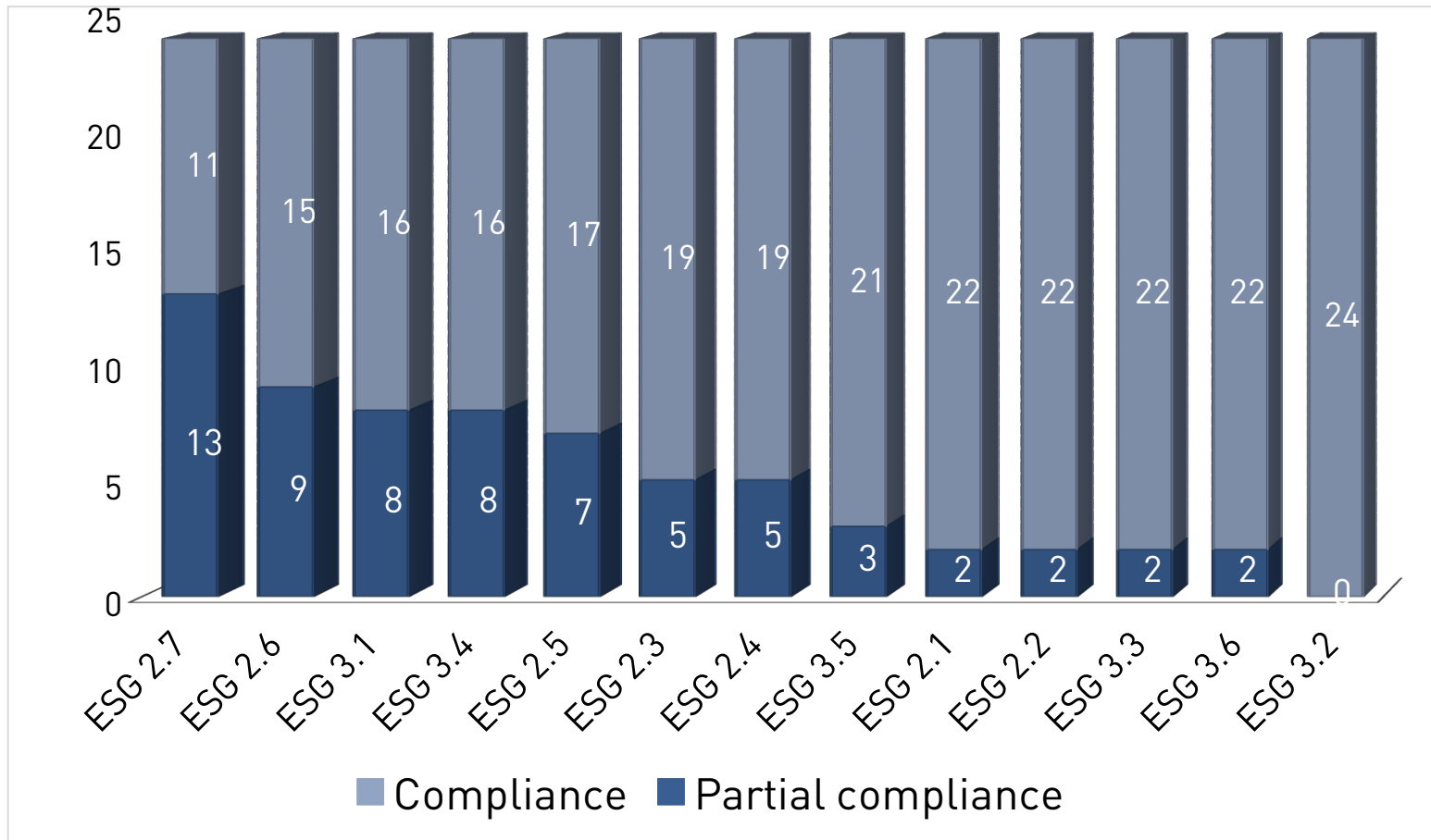
52%

10%

38%

Compliance with ESG Part 2 & Part 3

Register Committee conclusions on individual standard



Conclusions based on 24 applications considered since 2015

- Compliance (78%)
- Partial compliance (21%).

Challenging standards



ESG 2.6. Reporting	Full reports & decisions should be published. Not publishing negative reports or decisions, or only publishing summary reports would not be sufficient to be in compliance with the standard.
ESG 2.7 Complaints and appeals	Failings identified in the implementation of appeals procedure and complaints processes i.e. impartiality of the process or composition of the appeal body etc.
ESG 3.4 Thematic analysis	Agencies have to prepare and publish reports that describe and analyse the general findings of their external QA on a regular basis
ESG 2.5 Criteria for outcomes	Transparency of decision-making i.e. publication of the criteria for all procedures or in ensuring consistency in the application of criteria.
ESG 3.1 Activities, policy and process for QA	Stakeholder involvement in the governance and work of the agencies Clear separation between external QA and other fields of work & the separation between activities within and outside the scope of the ESG.

Examples where national QA systems have an impact on ESG compliance



ESG 2.2: Designing methodologies fit for purpose

In a number of countries it is the Ministry and its national accreditation council who coordinates and designs the methodologies employed by the QA agency.

- what is the role of the QA agency and what is the role of other responsible authorities?
- who is responsible for the involvement of stakeholders in the design of new procedures?
- who ensures the methodologies are fit for purpose?

ESG 3.3 Independence

In a number of countries it is the Ministry who decides on the composition and nomination of the board.

- How is appointment of the quality assurance agency director its board, council is done by the Ministry?
- Is the selection process clear and transparent?

Examples where national QA systems have an impact on ESG compliance



ESG 2.7: Complaints and appeals

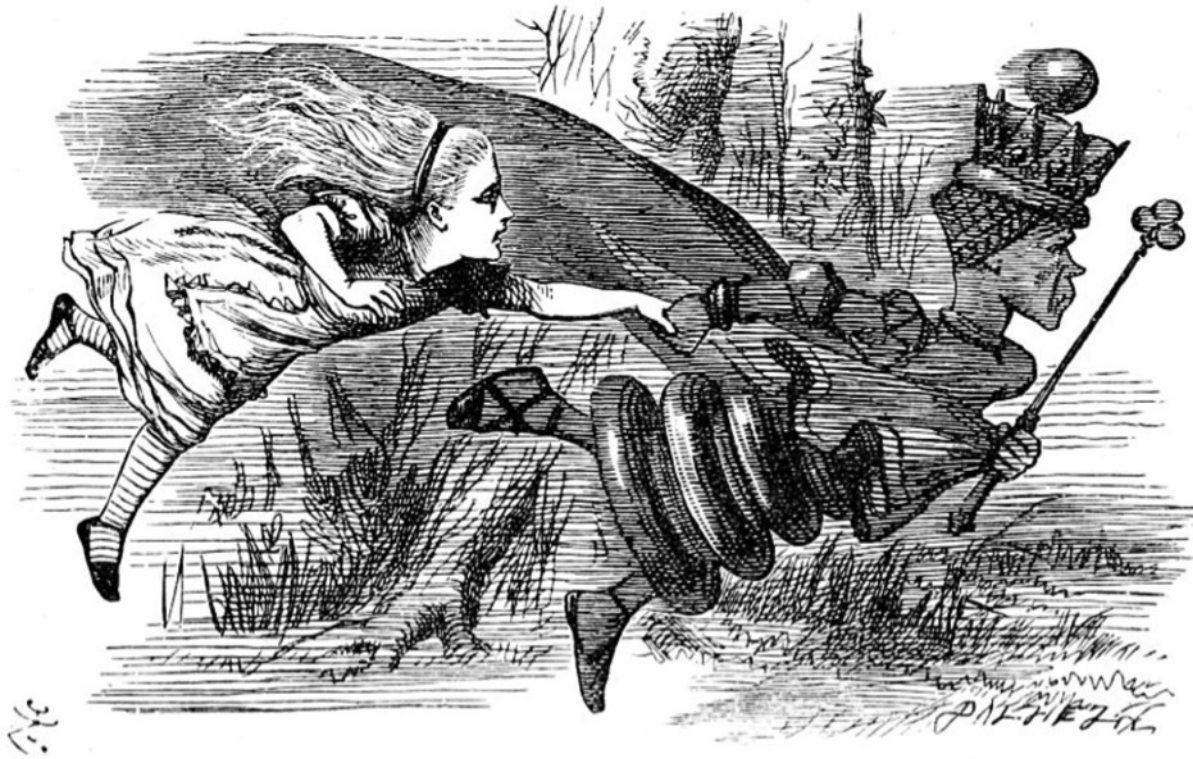
“appeals processes should be clearly defined as part of the design of external quality assurance processes and communicated to the institutions” . Guidelines note that “the agencies, need to handle [issues of concern] in a professional way by means of a clearly defined process that is consistently applied”

When the responsibility with the appeal of EQA procedures lies with the Ministry or with the judiciary (e.g. Croatia, Hungary, Latvia)

- what is the role of QA agencies in such situations?
- what happens if the initial decision is overturn?
- what is the internal system of the appeals procedure? How is consistency in decision ensured?
- how this communicated to back the QA agency?

Lessons to be learned..

eqar



Red Queen's race: "*it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place*" (Lewis Carol, Through the Looking Glass)



Thank you for your attention!

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