Higher Education Modernisation Practice Around the World

The viewpoint from the Quality Assurance Agencies in Europe: ENQA

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Background information on ENQA

- Network in 2000; association in 2004

- Membership association for QA agencies in the EHEA : 44 Full members, 4 Candidate members (25 Bologna countries)

- 35 Affiliates since 2006

- Structure: Board, General Assembly, Director and Secretariat, Appeals Committee

- Co-operation within E4 (EUA, ESU, EURASHE)

- represents the interests of its members in the EHEA and internationally:

  ‣ consultative member in the BFUG

  ‣ member of INQAAHE regional representatives' forum

  ‣ Taking part in the GIQAC (UNESCO-WB)

QA agencies in Europe

The legal contexts vary enormously and include:

Single national agencies:

- Single national agencies under **national requirements**.
- A single agency that is established within and under the legal requirements of **2 countries** (e.g. NVAO)
- A single national agency that is also working under **regional legal requirements** (e.g. Switzerland)

Multiple agencies working within a country on:

- an autonomous **regional basis** (e.g. Spain)
- a '**competitive market**' basis (e.g. Germany),
- a basis of the **differentiated HE secto**r (e.g. Austria)

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ENQA Membership structure

	Full Members	Candidates	Associates	Afiliates
QA agencies	**37**	**11**	23	
European Organisations	**2**		3	4
Non European Organisations			3	

Full Membership: QA agencies from EHEA member states that have been operating for at least two years fulfilling criteria (ESG)
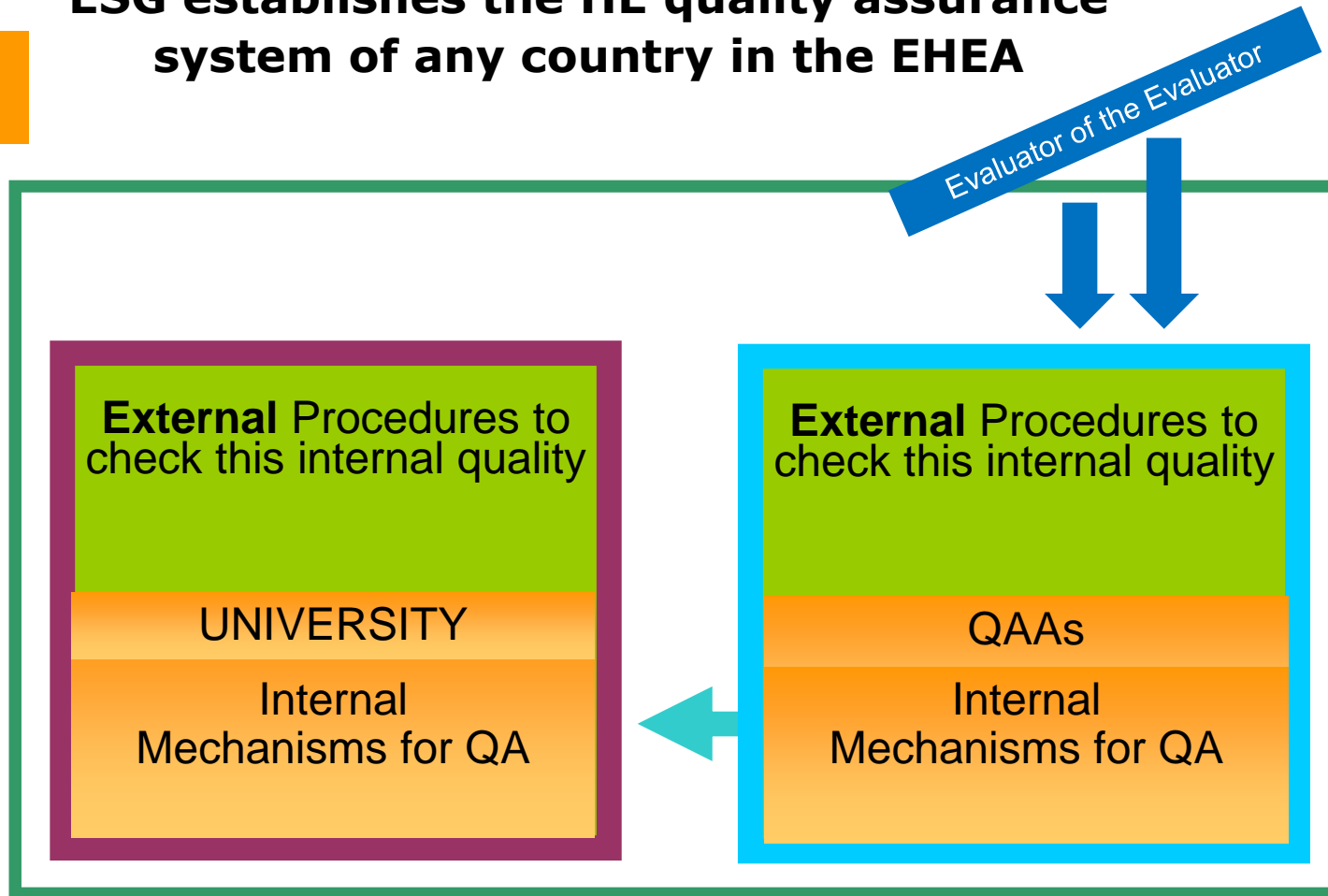
Applicant agency does not meet the criteria for Full Membership, but is likely to be able to meet the criteria within two years of the Candidate Membership is granted.

Associate members: bona fide organisation or agency with a demonstrable interest in the quality assurance of higher education.

Affiliate member: network of bona fide quality assurance agencies or other bona fide umbrella organisation concerned with the quality assurance of higher education.

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ENQA — EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

ESG establishes the HE quality assurance system of any country in the EHEA

Evaluator of the Evaluator

External Procedures to check this internal quality

UNIVERSITY

Internal Mechanisms for QA

External Procedures to check this internal quality

QAAs

Internal Mechanisms for QA

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European standards and guidelines (ESG)

- Drafted by ENQA in consultation with EUA, EURASHE and ESU

- Approved by the Bologna ministerial conference in Bergen in 2005

- Introduced **internationally accepted standards** for quality assurance in higher education

- Introduced a **peer review system** for quality assurance agencies:
  - ‣ Cyclical reviews of agencies, based on ESG, every five years for (reconfirmation of) full ENQA membership and/or for being (re)listed in EQAR
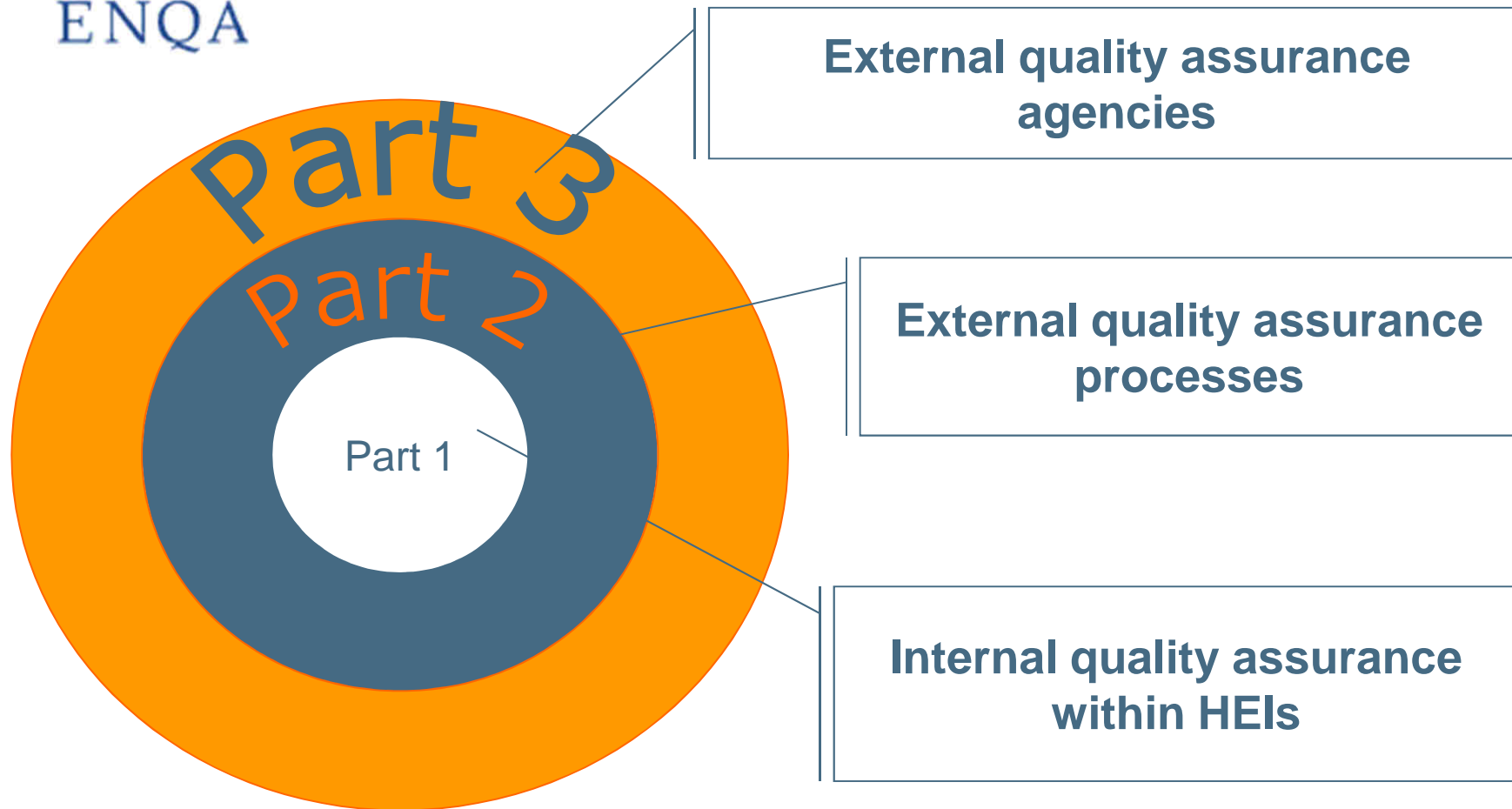
Importance of QA at international level

Development of common standards, guidelines and principles
(such as the ESG)

Comparability and compatibility of QA processes

➢ Facilitate comparison and understanding between national QA systems
➢ Facilitate comparison and recognition of degrees and results of external QA activities
➢ Build and promote mutual trust
➢ Improve mobility
➢ Increase transparency for students, employers and the society as a whole

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Part 3

Part 2

Part 1

External quality assurance agencies

External quality assurance processes

Internal quality assurance within HEIs

3 main strands for QA agencies

Legitimacy of the agency to undertake evaluations of HEI's

> Official Status
> Mission statement
> Independence

Activities of the agency in its evaluation work

> Activities *
> Accountability of the QA agency

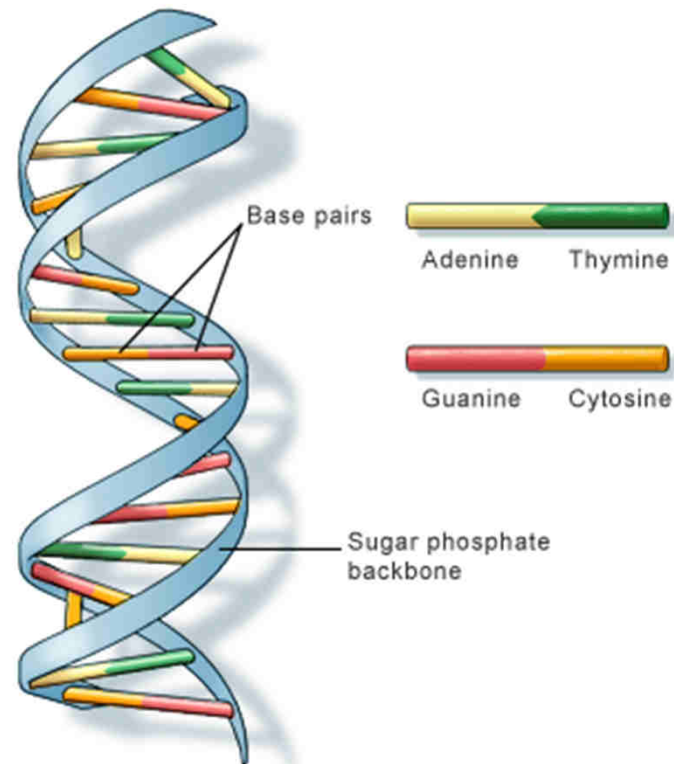**Sustainability** of the agency to continue with its work

> Resources
> Accountability of the QA agency

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Judgements of the review panels 2005-2009

Standards compliance	FC	SC	PC	NC
The use of external QA procedures	15	6	1	0
Official status	23	0	1	0
Activities (regular)	23	1	0	0
Resources	16	5	3	0
Mission statement	16	8	0	0
Independence	16	5	5	0
External QA criteria and processess used by agencies	14	8	2	0
Accountability	15	7	1	0

Values are included when a clear judgement is made in the report

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IQAS of QAAs: the DNA for mutual trust

U.S. National Library of Medicine

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QA of Joint-Programmes:

- ENQA Seminar QA of J-P, Vienna September 2011
- J-P ideal laboratory to explore cooperation among QAAs and legal frameworks (TEEP II, TEAM II, EUA…)
- Agreement between generic (core) standards and specific (national) requirements
- A special procedure? A European approach?
- Possibility for QAAs to recognise single accreditations procedures: and governments/ENIC-NARICS?

The (winding) road to recognition in the EHEA:

- External reviews of QAA against the ESG set up the basis to favour Mutual Recognition
- QA/accreditation J-P ideal laboratory to explore MRAs
- Combined along with other transparency tools: QFs
- What is still missing to get the goal?
- *What do we need to put into practice the Lisbon Recognition Convention?*

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ENQA Position Paper on Transparency Tools

- From rankings to (sound) information on HEIs and viceversa
- Seen as a symptom rather than a diagnosis: less as a solution
- Feed society's eagerness for information with a combined (and simplifying) set of tools: Bologna transparency tools (DS, ECTS, QF); QA/accred. accountability reports; and top-research HIEs indicators...
- Stakeholder-tailored tools to retrieve information

ENQA Position Paper on Transparency Tools

- Transparency cannot be considered mono-dimensional. Purpose for which the information is requested:
  - to choose a programme;
  - to choose an institution;
  - to make strategic decisions at institutional and system levels;
  - to provide confidence in the output of HEIs.
- Bologna transparency tools, quality assurance and rankings/classifications serve different purposes: they support each other.
- It is misleading to consider them as alternatives.
- QA has two main purposes: accountability and enhancement.

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QA Cooperation: international networking

- INQAAHE: the global container
- A double focus:
  - ‣ Capacity building: GIQAC (UNESCO-WB): Balkans and Central Asia
  - ‣ Innovation agenda:
    - professional accreditors/labels (INQAAHE-ENQA Seminar, Brussels 1-2 December 2011)
    - MRA based on GGP / ESG: ANECA-SINAES (RIACES)
    - Training of experts
    - Data base of good practices in QA (Clearinghouse)

The international agenda of QA: challenges

Harmonisation and convergence of QA processes, based on common principles (e.g. generic frameworks such as INQAAHE GGP and ESG):

➢ easier comparison and understanding between national QA systems
➢ easier recognition of degrees and results of external QA activities
➢ build and promote mutual trust
➢ improve transparency

INQAAHE Biennial Conference, Taipei April 2013

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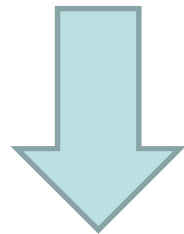
6. **The way forward**

Conclusions

If quality is a journey and not a destination, here we have some of the next stops in this interesting trip:

➢ Quality Procedures Project "Visions for the future"
➢ QA LLL
➢ The European dimension of QA: an interregional dialogue
➢ QA of joint-programmes
➢ QA and discipline-oriented labels
➢ The architecture of QA in the EHEA: ENQA, EQAR, E-4: Map-ESG

Bologna Policy Forum Statement, Vienna, March 2010

Today, the European Higher Education Area has been launched*. In this context, we note that the Bologna Process of creating and further developing this European Education Area has helped to redefine higher education in Europe. Countries outside the area will now be able to more effectively foster increased* **cooperation** *with Bologna countries.*

**Bologna Ministerial Meeting
Bucharest, April 2012**

Thank you
for your attention

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