ENQA a key player in the European Higher Education Area

Meeting of the Belarus University System representatives

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ENQA at a glance

Umbrella NGO for European QA agencies in HE

Mission: To contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of European HE at a high level, and act as a major driving force for the development of QA.

Membership:
- 38 Full members
- 6 Candidate members
- 42 Affiliates
  (covers ca. 40 countries)

Membership criteria by and large "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG)

Political context for Higher Education

Higher Education in Europe is mainly public (fees for students are subsidised and many universities are public institutions).

National governments have full competences in education (even within the European Union (EU). The EU have just the capacity to promote synergies with funds and incentives. A good example is the Bologna Process.

Higher Education institutions have significant levels of autonomy.

National Higher Education Systems are diverse as well as the main national policies (although there is tendency for sharing common goals: quality and internationalisation).

Socio-economic context for Higher Education

Higher Education is a driving force for the future of economic and social well being of Europe.

Higher Education in Europe needs to be internationally competitive (attraction of talent and generation of competent professionals).

Autonomy of Higher Education institutions and the use of public budgets in the sector requires systems to generate trust, efficiency and effectiveness.
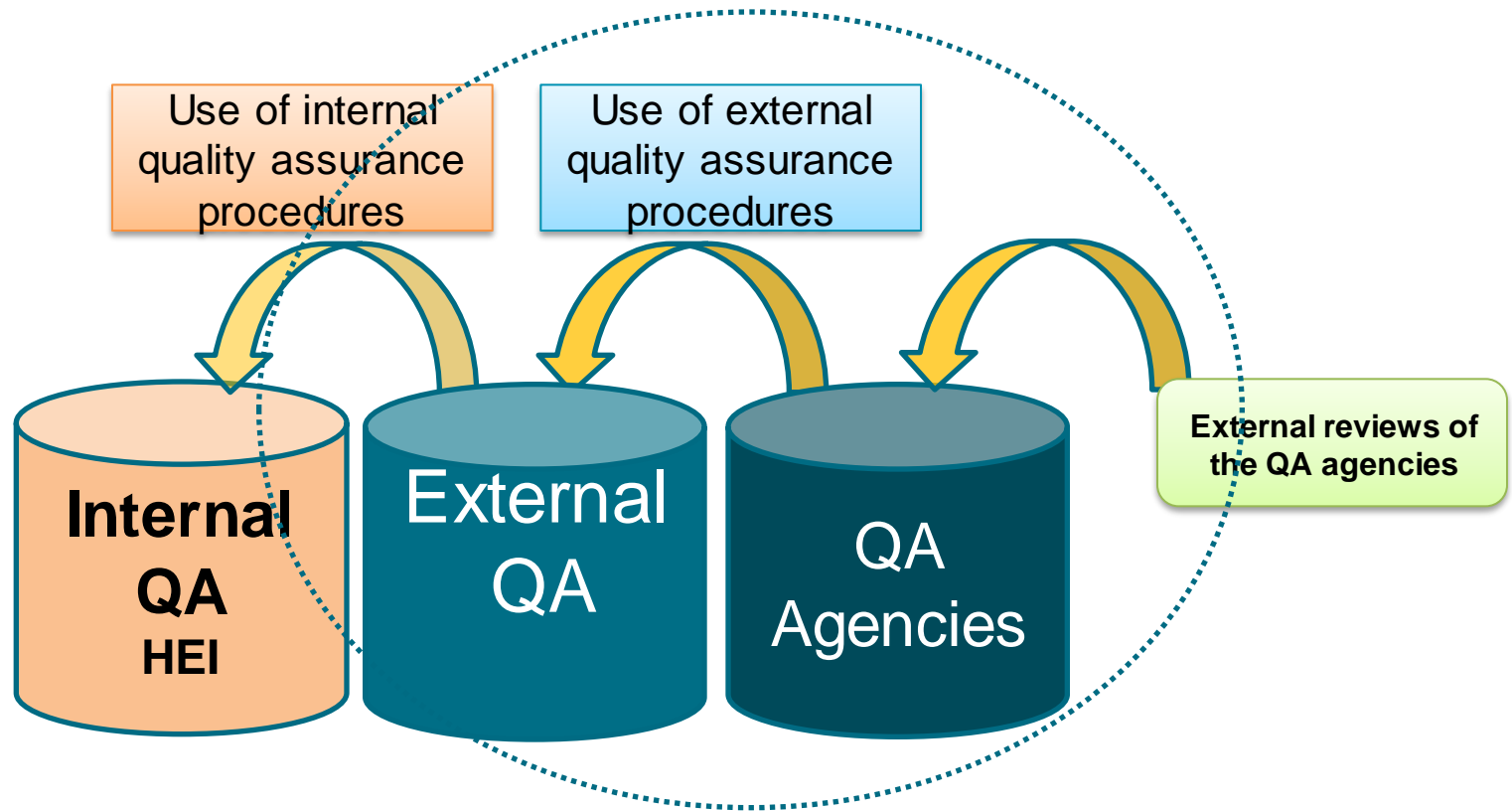
The introduction of quality assurance is observed by the academic communities and by the stakeholders (students, employers…) as an advanced tool to be used in managing Higher Education.

Enhancing public information about Higher Education is a value (trust is an asset).

Pillars of the EHEA

- Compatible structure of degrees / European Qualifications Framework. (bachelor (employability) / masters (specialisation) / Doctorate (Research).

- Academic infrastructure (elements for programme specification: ECTS, intended learning outcomes, public information).

- **Quality assurance** schemes (internally and externally)

European Standards and Guidelines

Use of internal quality assurance procedures

Use of external quality assurance procedures

External reviews of the QA agencies

Internal QA HEI

External QA

QA Agencies

Internal QA for Higher Education Institutions

How quality is assured by HEI?

- Policy for QA

- Approval, monitoring and reviews of programmes

- Assessment of students

- QA of teaching staff

- Learning resources and student support

- Information systems

- Public information

External QA methodology

How external QA is organised?
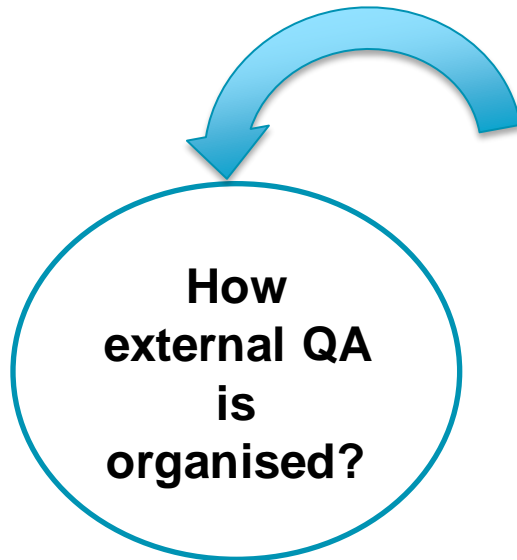
- Effectiveness of internal QA

- Aims and objectives for external QA determined before

- Criteria for decisions be explicit and published

- Designed to ensure their fitness for purpose

- Reports to be published

- Follow up procedures

- Periodic reviews

- System-wide analysis

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
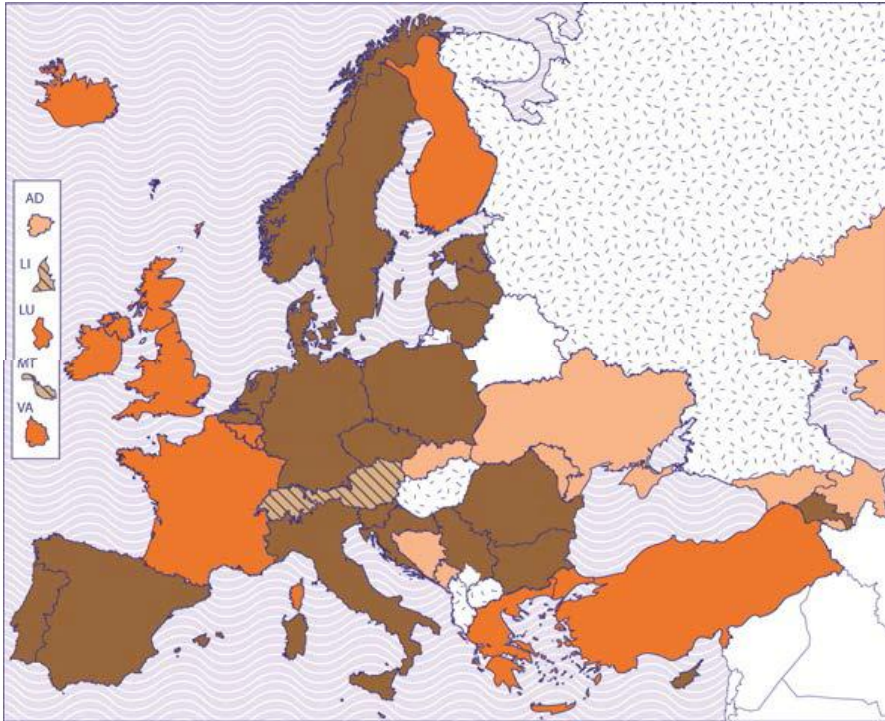
Flexible guidelines for QA

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)

Agencies internationally orienetd (discipline oriented)

- Orange: advisory improvement oriented.
- Brown: decision granting permission

- In the majority of EHEA countries, quality assurance is concerned with granting permission to higher education institutions or programmes to operate on the basis of threshold quality standards. Only a minority of countries exclusively follow an improvement-oriented approach.

Source: BP implementation report 2012.

How QA is organised?

Number of institutions?

Diversity in HE institutions?
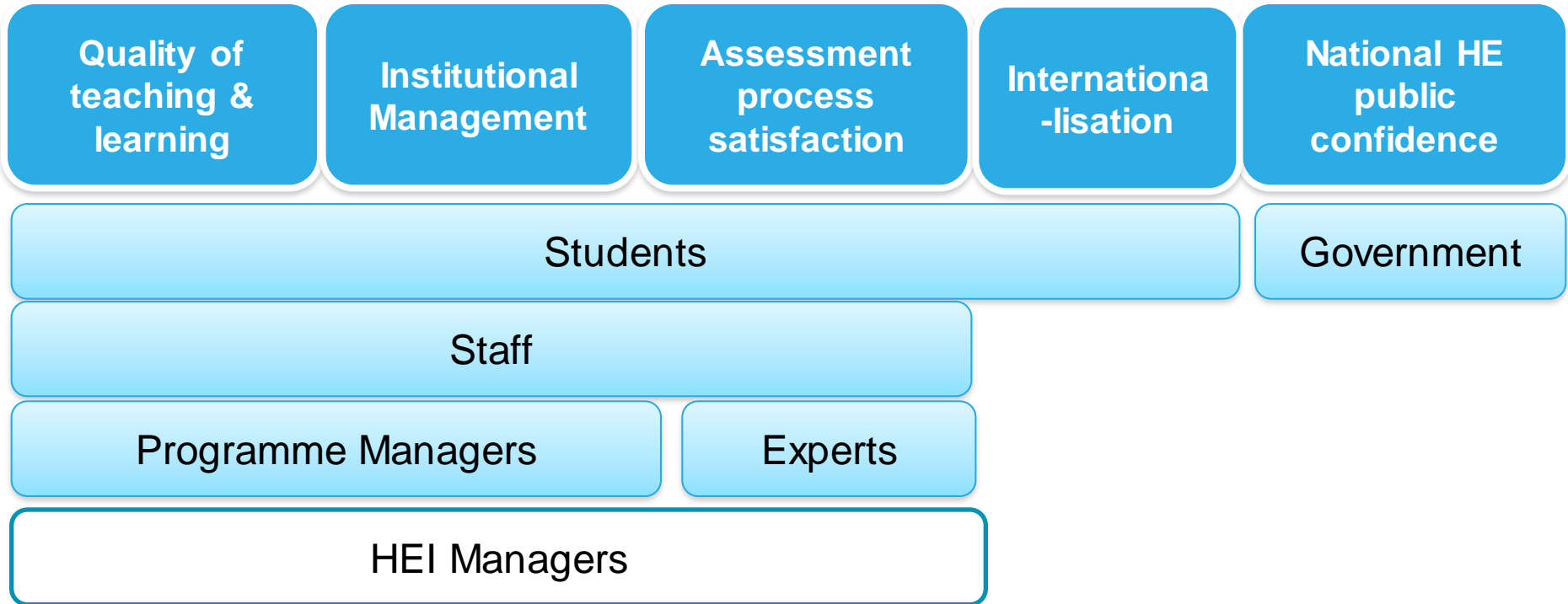
HE funding systems?

Links between HE political targets and EQA procedures?

Mission of the agency and measurable targets?

Primary responsibility of HE in QA?

Statistics on HE available to the public?

Measuring impact of EQA

Quality of teaching & learning	Institutional Management	Assessment process satisfaction	Internationa -lisation	National HE public confidence

Students	Government

Staff

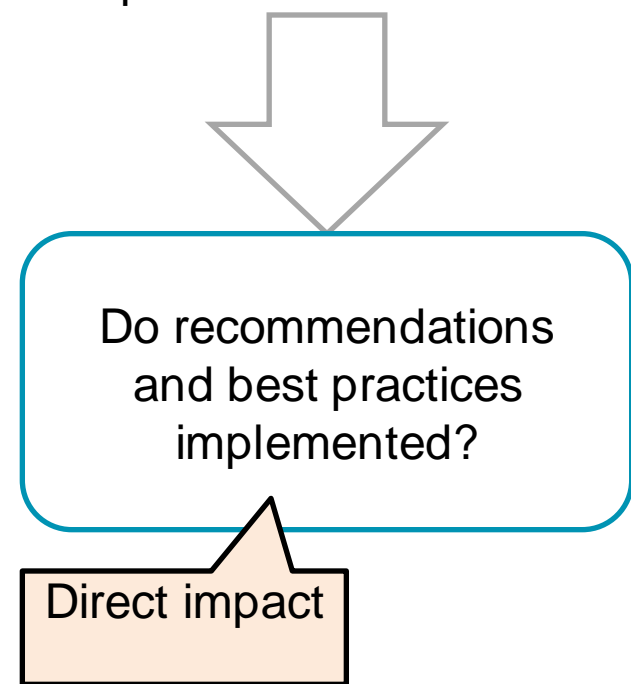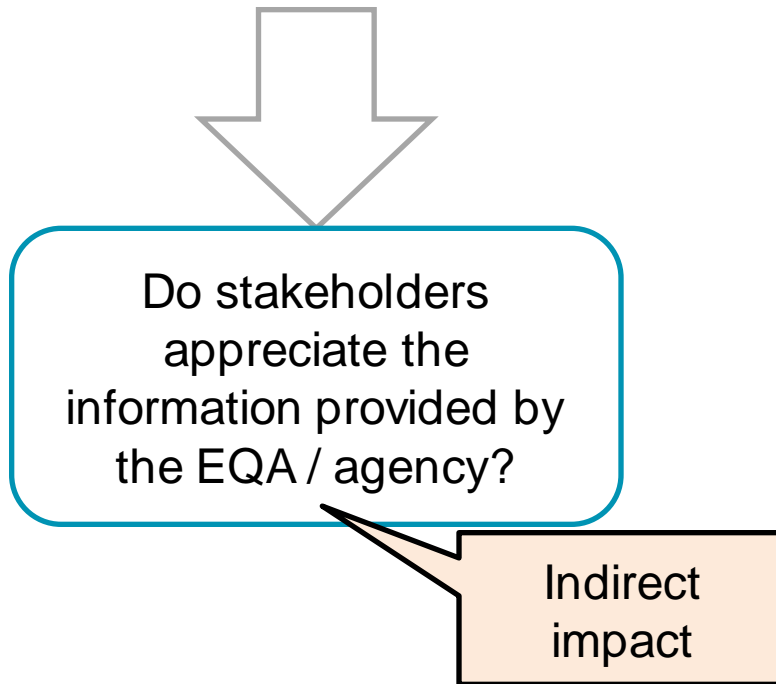| Programme Managers	Experts

HEI Managers

Provision of information / Better management

- National data /benchmarks
- Surveys

- Enhancing the role of the students.
- Accreditation – curriculum development

Do stakeholders appreciate the information provided by the EQA / agency?

Indirect impact

Do recommendations and best practices implemented?

Direct impact

ENQA projects

- **International evaluations of** national **QA agencies** (fulfillment of ESG).
- **Working groups** (Excellence, Impact, stakeholders involvement, QA staff development)
- Developments in **QA methodology** (TEEP, FLLLEX)
- **Capacity building** (Central Asia, Balkans, South East Asia)
- **Mapping European QA** procedures (Visions for the future, MAP-ESG)
- **Workshops** (Independence, e-learning, lifelong learning, Qualifications frameworks…)

Latest projects:

- **Transparency** of European higher education through public quality assurance reports – EQArep
- **Promoting Quality Culture** in Higher Education Institutions – PQC

- **Enhancement of Quality Assurance Management** in Jordanian Universities – EQuAM

Example of topics for an international evaluation
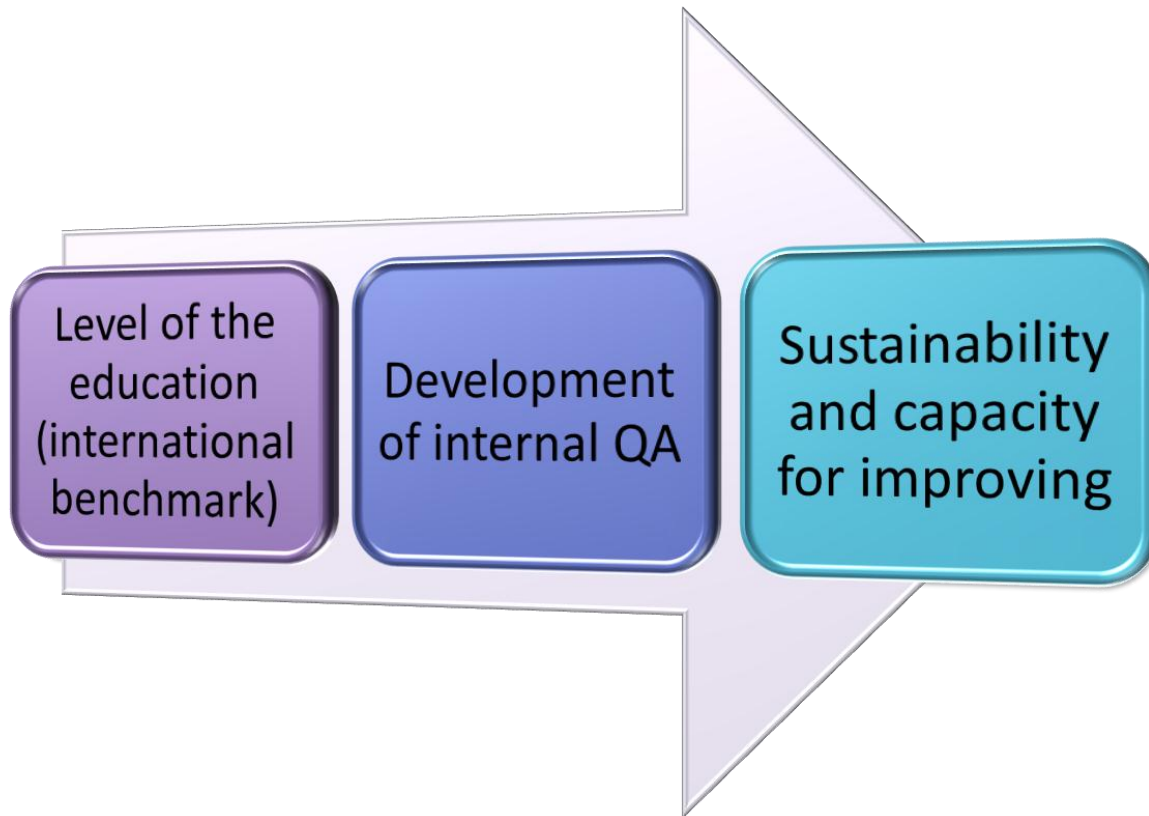
Thank you for your attention!

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