

Update on EQAR Activities

for the 26-27 September 2024 BFUG meeting

Contents

1. Register.....	1
2. New EQAR Director	2
3. Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR)	2
4. Projects where EQAR is involved.....	3
4.1. IMINQA.....	3
4.2. QA FIT	4
4.3. TPG LRC CORE.....	4

1. Register

At the April 2024 meeting, the EQAR Register Committee concluded that the following agencies demonstrated their substantial compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA (ESG).

Approved applications:

- **CYQAA** – The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education
- **IEP** – Institutional Evaluation Programme
- **PKA** – Polish Accreditation Committee
- **Unibasq** – Agency for Quality of the Basque University System

At the July 2024 meeting, the EQAR Register Committee concluded that the following agencies demonstrated their substantial compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA (ESG).

Approved applications:

- **A3ES** – Agency for Evaluation and Accreditation of Higher Education
- **AHPGS** – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences
- **AQ Austria** – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria
- **CTI** – Engineering Degree Commission
- **evalag** – Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg
- **QQI** – Quality and Qualifications Ireland

See also:

- Full list of the [Register Committee decisions](#)
- [Database of precedents](#), featuring various search/filter options and including relevant excerpts of RC decisions.
- [Key statistics](#) on the application process and ESG compliance (make sure to scroll down to view all the different charts).

2. New EQAR Director

Aleksandar Šušnjar has been appointed the new Director at EQAR and he started in his position as of 9 September 2024. More information can be found at the [link](#).

3. Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR)

DEQAR is the Database of External Quality Assurance Results on activities performed by EQAR-registered quality assurance agencies. DEQAR collects their reports and decisions (i.e. accreditations and evaluations) on higher education institutions mainly based in the EHEA, but also beyond.

Key Statistics (September 2024)		
	March 2024	September 2024
Reports	97 197	102 687
Institutions	3740	4109
Agencies*	55	56
Coverage **	31	32

*Number of agencies that have at some point uploaded reports in DEQAR

** EHEA systems where DEQAR includes reports on at least 50% of the institutions listed in the European Tertiary Education Register (ETER), except where this does not represent a substantial part of the HE system:

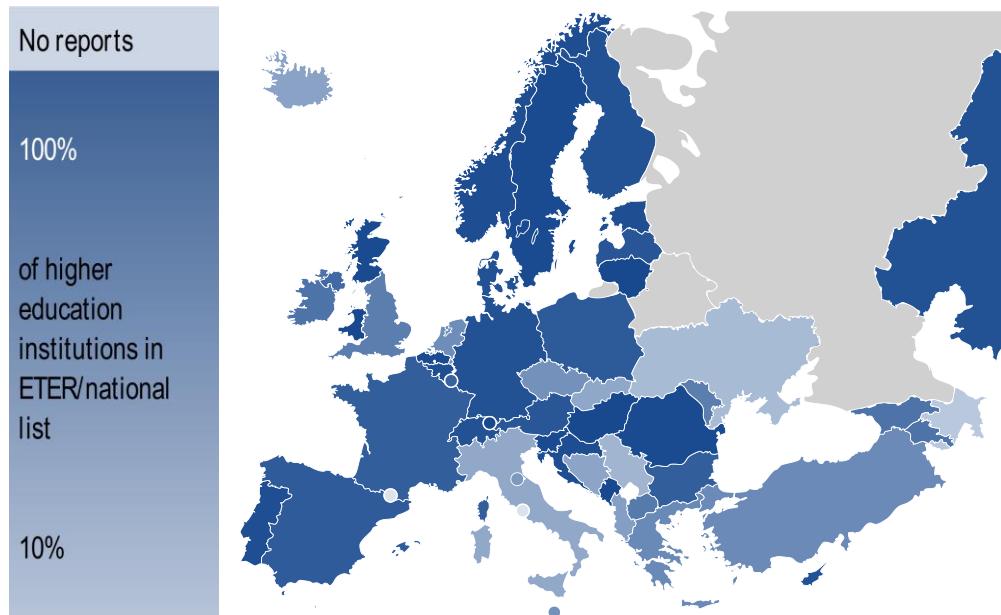


Figure 1: DEQAR coverage (percentage of HEIs with QA reports)

Updates from DEQAR:

- The number of higher education systems covered well as a result of EQAR agencies upload of external QA reports in March is thirty two: Austria, Belgium (Flemish Community), Belgium (French Community), Bulgaria, Denmark, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Moldova, Northern Ireland (UK), Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Scotland (UK), Spain, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, and Wales (UK).
- Some **ENIC-NARIC** centres are **integrating information on accredited higher education institutions from DEQAR into their workflows**, with a view to speeding up the recognition process for qualifications issued by HEIs present in DEQAR.
- Since March 2024, **QA agencies can store accreditations and evaluations on other (alternative) providers** (i.e. providers not having degree awarding powers but offer programmes at QF level 5-8) and **micro credentials** (i.e. programmes of small volume not leading to full recognised degree). **First uploads** took place throughout the summer of 2024 – the results can be [accessed here](#).
- All DEQAR data, including the **programme accreditations**, is now uploaded to the **European Digital Credentials for Learning (EDC)** by default. As a result, all providers covered in DEQAR are able to issue accredited digital credentials in EDC.
- EQAR introduced **Glossary of terms** on its website, aimed to help end users understand the **terminology used in DEQAR**, including keywords such as “micro-credentials”, “other providers” and “higher education institutions”. The glossary can be [found here](#).

Further general information on DEQAR can be found at: <https://www.eqar.eu/qa-results/infographics/>

Information on how to connect to the DEQAR's API and extract the data can be found here: <https://www.eqar.eu/qa-results/connect-to-api/>

4. Projects where EQAR is involved

4.1. IMINQA

The Implementation and Innovation in QA through Peer Learning (IMINQA) project is a three-year ERASMUS+ co-funded project (May 2022 – April 2023) led by the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training in partnership with ENQA, ARACIS (on behalf of Romania) and EQAR.

IMINQA Working Group on Micro-credentials had its last two meetings, in April and September 2024, respectfully. EQAR presented the draft feasibility study on quality label for all providers working in alignment with the European Approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability. The paper delves into the feasibility of a quality label, evaluates the necessity of establishing a new one, and examines potential models for its implementation. In doing so, it explores the existing quality label landscape within European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and gathers insights from two key stakeholder groups, alternative providers and quality assurance agencies. It is expected to be completed by November 2024. In addition, EQAR showcased the first uploads of reports on certified micro-credentials and other providers, and the new Glossary section on the website (see also DEQAR updates).

4.2. QA FIT

The **QA FIT project** is led by ENQA having as partners EUA, EURASHE, ESU, EQAR, FINEEC, Irish University Association, ANOSR (NUS from Romania) and the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (associate partner). The projects activities include a desk research, four surveys on the ESG implementation, four reports and four focus groups including one with national ministries (led by EQAR), a final report, a final webinar and then a final policy event in Brussels (autumn 2024).

On 10 September the QA-FIT consortium organised a QA-FIT Final webinar, where EQAR together with other partners presented the latest publication and the cross-cutting analysis that have been developed in 2023-2024. The participation of the webinar had high attendance of more than 300+ participants. The final conference of the event will take place on 7 November 2024 in Brussels.

4.3. TPG LRC CORE

The project is led by the Information Centre on Academic Mobility and Equivalence (CIMEA) and aims to **support the work of the TPG B**. Other project partners include: HARNO, FEI, Nuffic, UHR, EUA, ESU and the Prime Minister Office – Albania. Main activities involve panel discussions and peer learning activities on common challenges (i.e. recognition of knowledge gained through alternative pathways, micro credentials, digitalisation of recognition workflows, European Degree etc.) and research that will further enable the peer learning.

EQAR is leading the **work group on digitalisation of recognition tools**. The group is organised **3 peer learning webinars** in autumn 2023 – each focusing on one of the phases of the recognition process. Main findings from each of the webinars will feed into publication on digitalization of recognition tools, which will, on one hand present good practices, and on another offer practical advices for digitalising recognition workflows. Main idea is that ENIC NARICs, recognition offices at HEIs and other actors in the field use the document as a guide/blueprint for digitalising their processes.

EQAR, along with EUA, ESU, Nuffic, HARNO and CIMEA, contributes to another work group in the project, **on quality assurance of recognition processes**.

EQAR contributed the publication “Ensuring and enhancing the quality of recognition process – Key considerations and recommendations” with analysis of DEQAR reports, The analysis, includes approx. 300 reports of HEIs based in 14 EHEA systems and looks into how EQAR registered agencies evaluate the work of HEIs in relation to ESG 1.4, with focus on the recognition aspects. The analysis can be [found here](#).