

# Role and Functioning of EQAR

HAQAA Training Course / Exchange Meeting

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# 1. Mission & Objectives

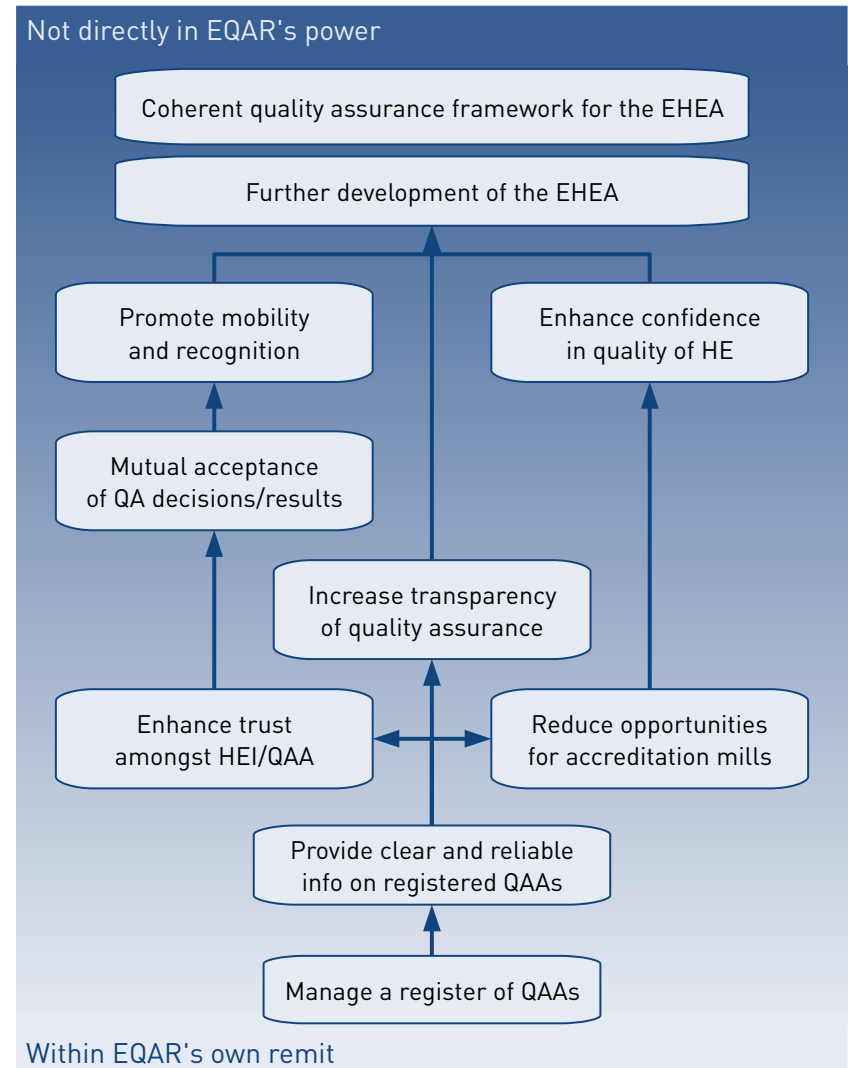


EQAR is the European register of quality assurance agencies that demonstrated substantial compliance with the ESG

**Vision:** “coherent quality assurance framework for the EHEA in which HEIs have the freedom to turn to any EQAR-registered agency [...], and in which qualifications are thus universally recognised”

**Mission:** “allow all stakeholders and the general public open access to objective information about trustworthy quality assurance agencies that are working in line with the ESG”

- Enhance transparency and information
- Support trust and recognition



## 2. Mandate



- Bergen Communiqué (2005)

“We welcome the principle of a European register of quality assurance agencies based on national review. We ask that the practicalities of implementation be further developed [...]”
- EU Recommendation (2006)

“3. encourage [national authorities and stakeholders] to set up a ‘European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies’ (European Register) [...]”
- London Communiqué (2007)

“We welcome the establishment of a register by the E4 group, working in partnership, based on their proposed operational model.”
- EQAR established within the Bologna Process:
  - Communiqués are political agreements, but not binding treaties
  - Registration on EQAR is voluntary
  - Consequences are not direct, but “soft law” or through national rules
- European Higher Education Area's (EHEA) official reference point

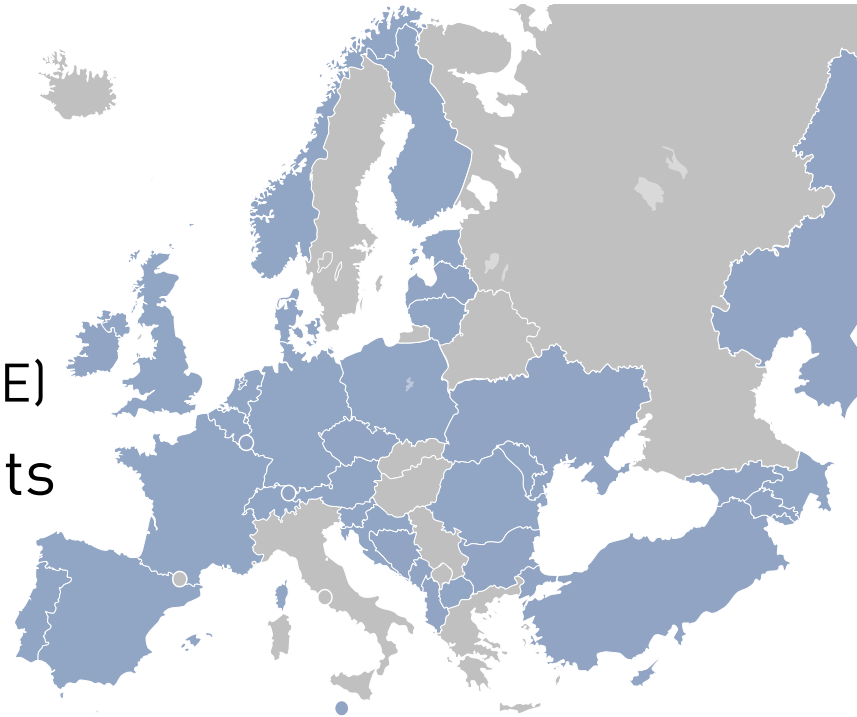
# 3. Ownership and legal form



- Founded by the “E4 Group” at ministers' request



- Non-profit association acting in the public interest
- Other stakeholder members:
  - BUSINESSEUROPE (employers)
  - Education International (staff in HE)
- 38 (of 48) European governments
  - Represented by ministries of higher education

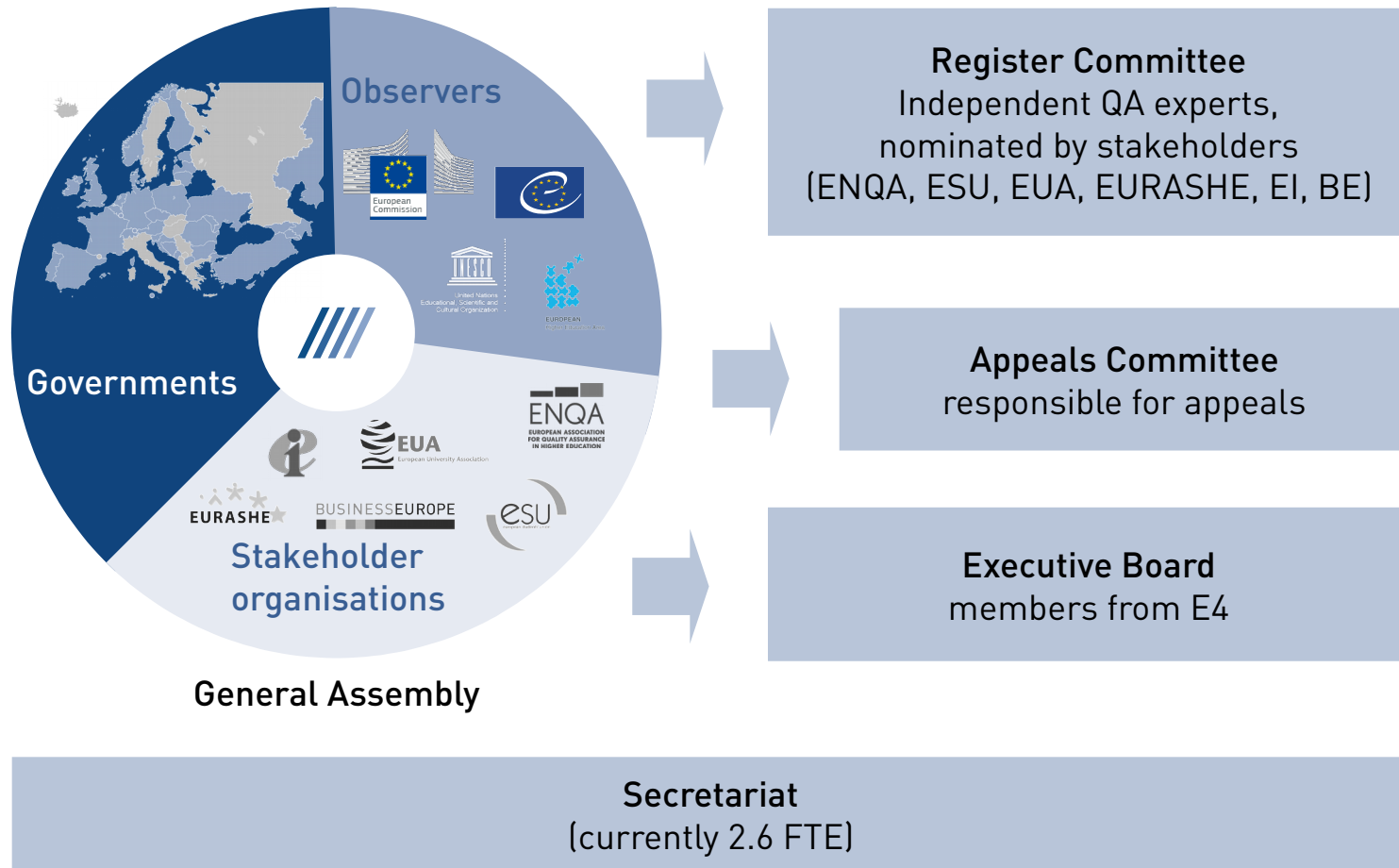


# Alternatives discussed & discarded

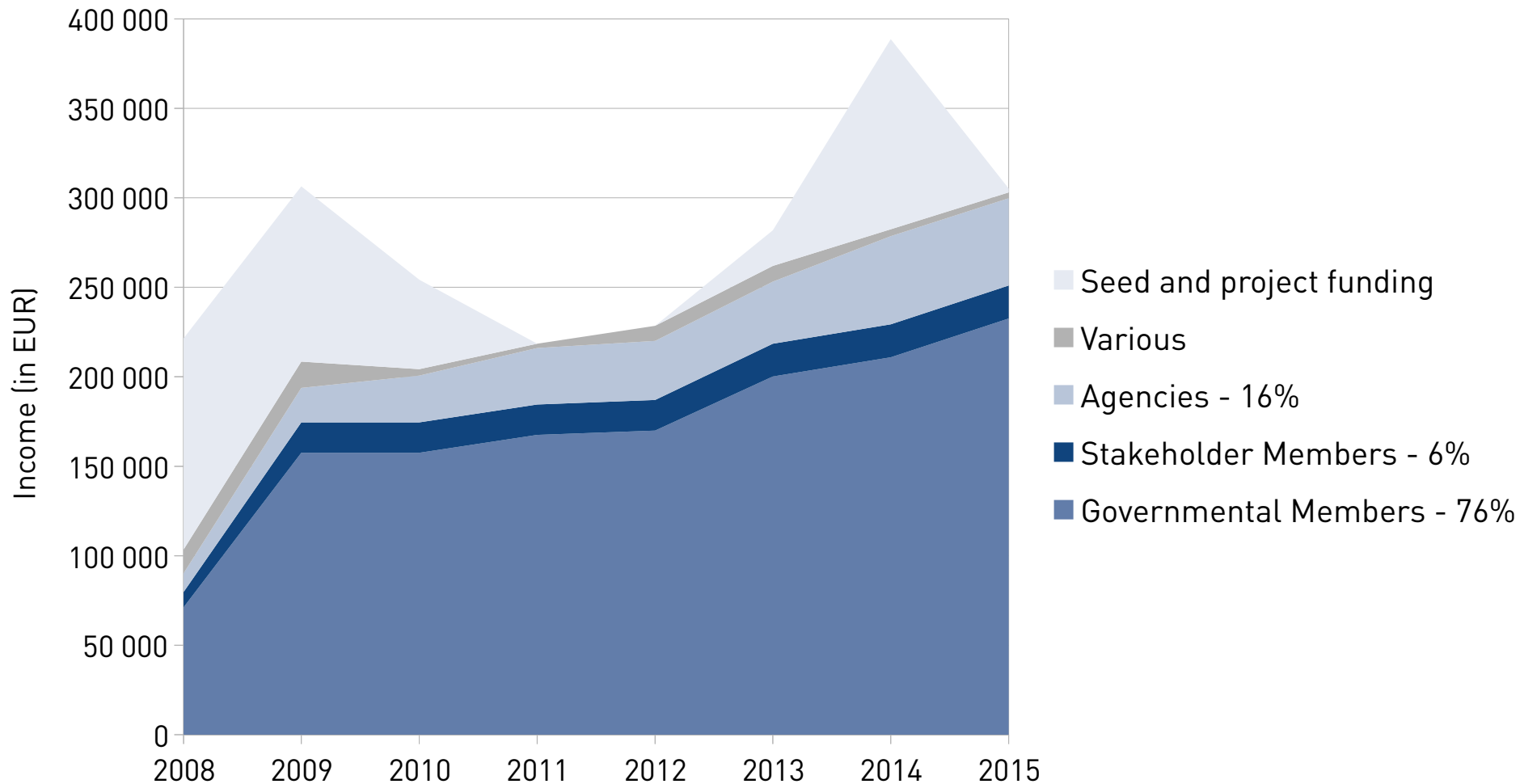


- Managed by existing organisation
  - Not sufficiently independent
- Other legal forms
  - Foundation – capital?
  - Company limited by guarantee – uncommon for activity
  - Special EU legal forms (SE, EEIG) – not 100% suitable, complex
  - International treaty – extremely complex
- Membership
  - Agencies – independence-related considerations
  - Without governments – lack of support and ownership

# 4. Organisational structure



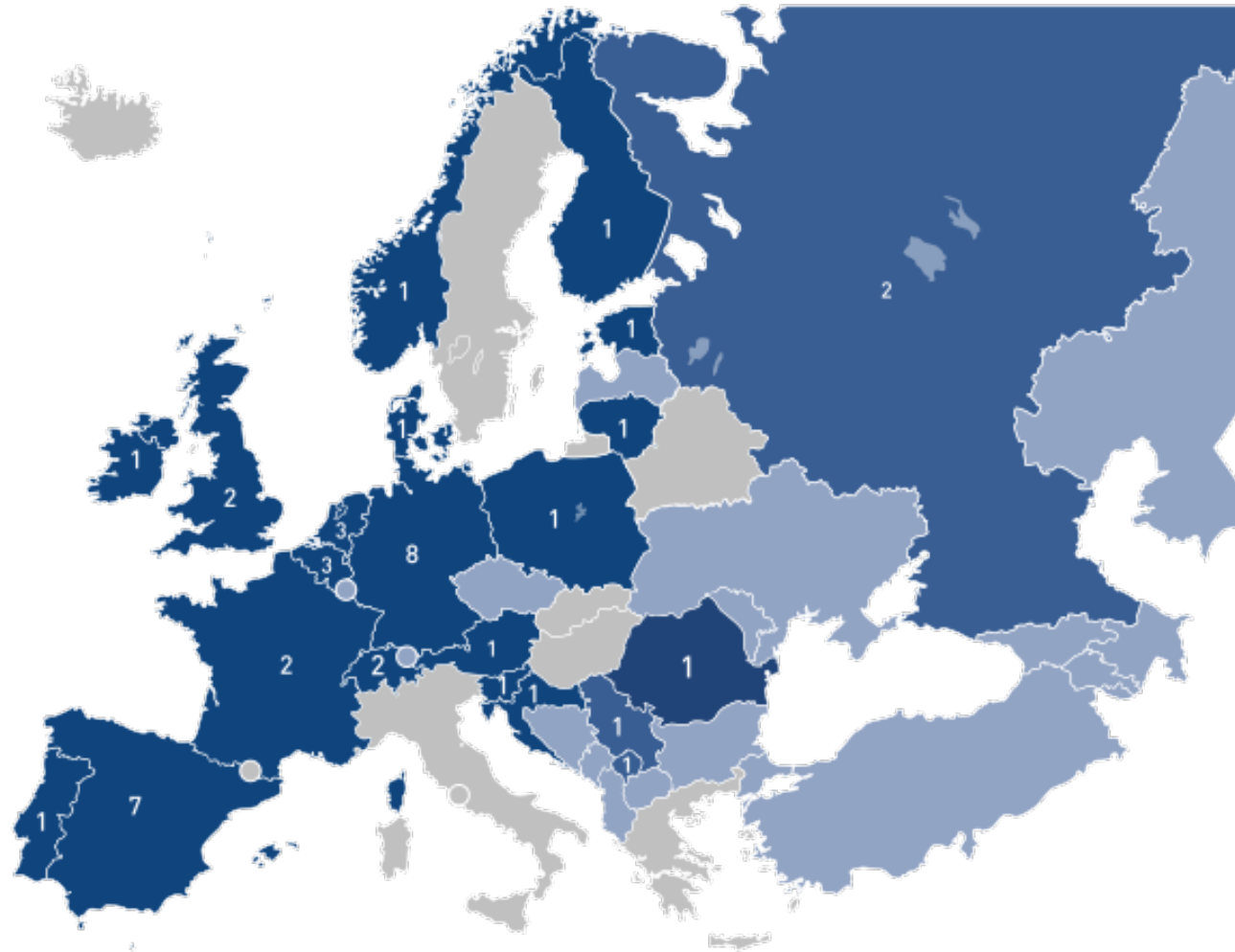
# 5. Funding



# EQAR-registered agencies and governmental members

eqar

- 43 registered QAAs
- Governmental members without registered agency

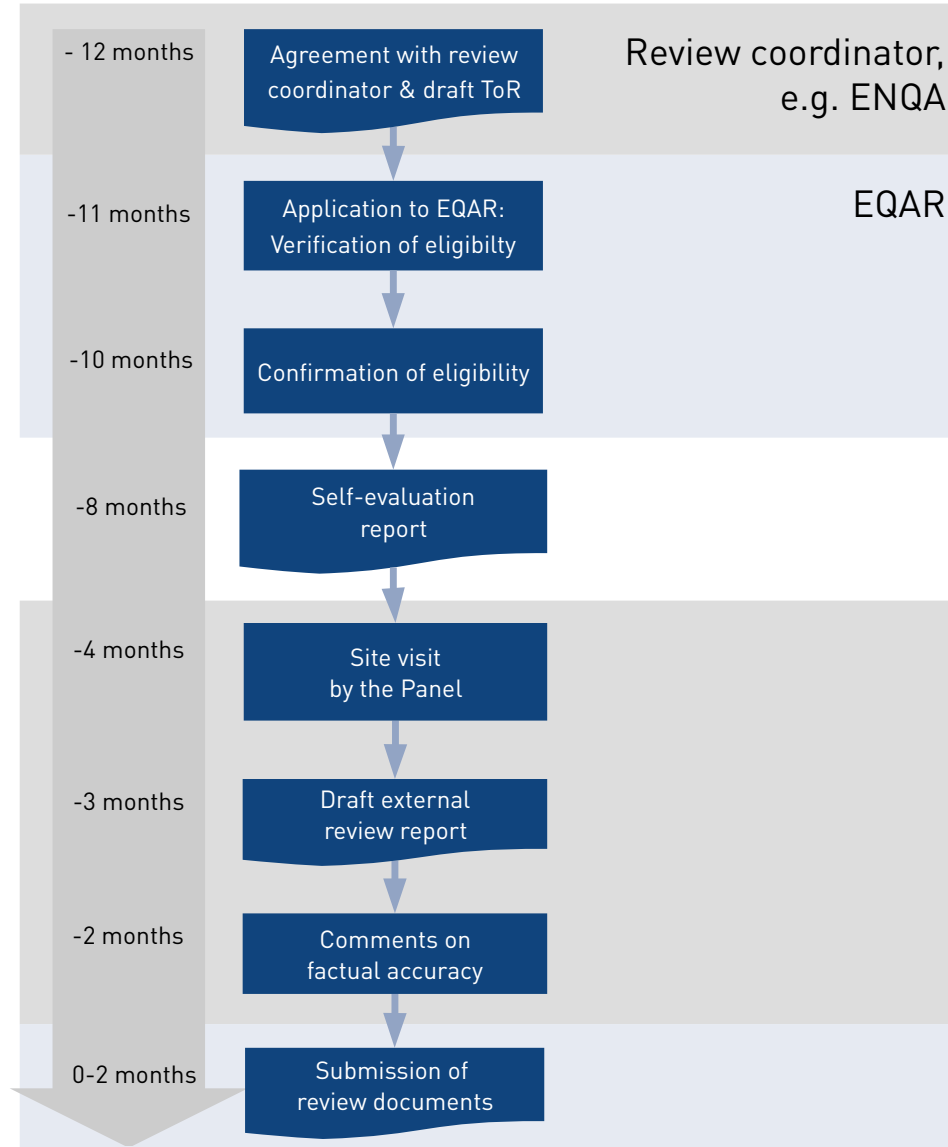


## 6. Registration process



1. **Self-evaluation** produced by the QA agency
2. **Site visit** by independent review team  
(QA professionals, students and academics)
3. External **review report** according to ESG
4. Report submitted to EQAR
5. **Decision** by EQAR Register Committee

# Application/renewal process



# Publication



News

About

Register

View as map

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Former entries

Criteria for Inclusion

Application Process

Registration and Renewal

Complaints

Documents

## //// MusiQuE - Music Quality Enhancement

Admission valid until: 2020-11-30 (listed s


Based in\*: Belgium

HE systems where agency conducted reviews\*\*: Armenia; Belgium; France; Germany; Poland; Portugal; R Switzerland; United

Reports by the agency: <http://www.musique>

External review reports and EQAR decisions:

 2016-06\_A31\_ApprovalDecision\_MusiQuE.pdf

 2015-

Application of: 17/11/2015  
External Review Report of: November 2015  
Review coordinated by: National Association of Sch  
Review Panel members: Daniel Sher (Chair), André Sharkey (academic), Iring V (student), Pieter-Jan Van d  
Decision of: 6 June 2016  
Registration until: 30 November 2020  
Absented themselves from decision-making: none  
Attachments: 

1. [Confirmation of eligibility](#)
2. [External Review Report](#)
3. [Applicant statement: "In financial sustainability o](#)

### Contact details

Website:

Address:

Contact Person:

### Conclusion

34. Based on the external review report and the considerations above, the Register Committee concluded that MusiQuE demonstrated compliance with the ESG (Parts 2 and 3) as follows:

Standard	Review panel conclusion	Register Committee conclusion
2.1	substantially complies	Compliance
2.2	fully complies	Compliance

# EQAR – system information



## Austria

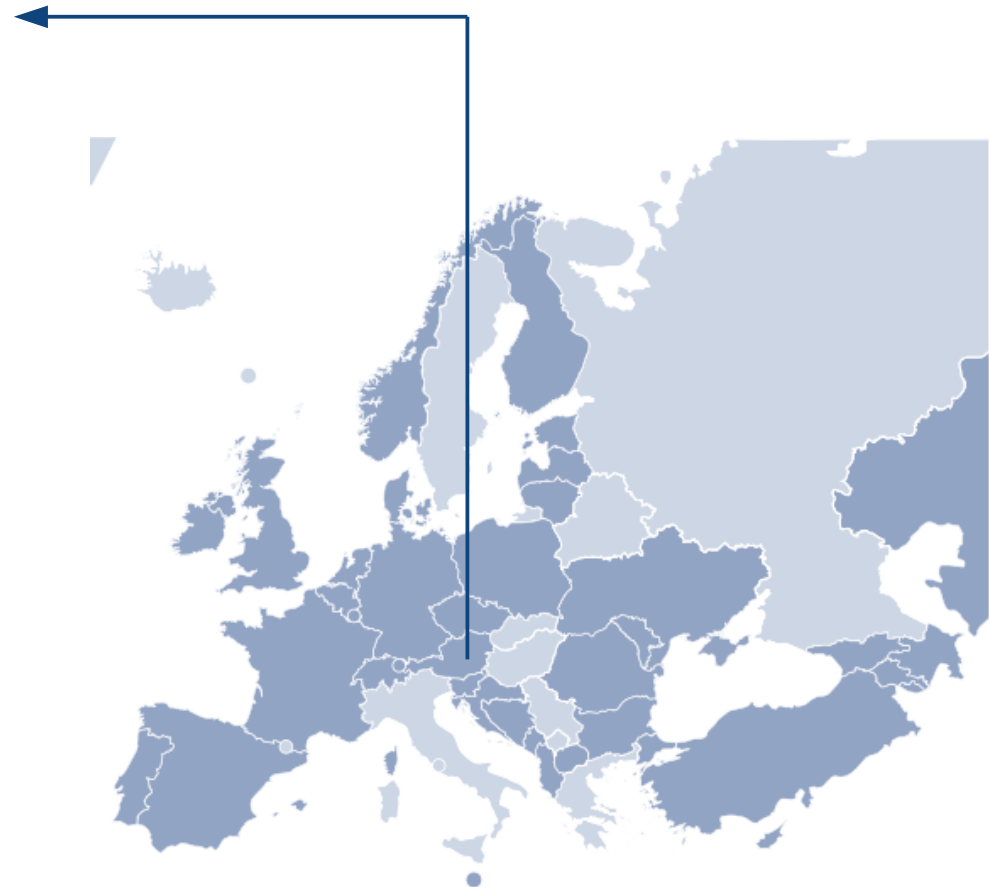
Austria has been a Governmental Member of EQAR since 2008.

### Focus of external quality assurance

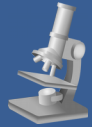
- *Public universities:* Institutional audit
- *Universities of applied sciences:* Institutional and initial programme accreditation; Institutional audit (after an uninterrupted accreditation period of 12 years)
- *Private universities:* Institutional and initial programme accreditation
- *University colleges of teacher education:* own methodology

### Can higher education institutions choose a suitable EQAR-registered agency?

- *Public universities:* yes.
- *Universities of applied science:* after having been re-accredited by the national Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQ Austria)
- *Private universities & university colleges of teacher education:* no.
- **Eligibility requirements for foreign agencies:**
  - Registration on EQAR
  - QA agencies have to submit an expression of interest to the Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy.
- **Condition for the agency's work:** compliance with the criteria by the Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy.
- **Further information/regulations:** [↗ Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education \(HS-QSG\) from March 2012 \(§ 19.\) \(page 14\)](#) & [↗ BMWF Presentation](#)



# 7. Monitoring processes



Registration based on external review of agency



Annual updates on reviews and countries



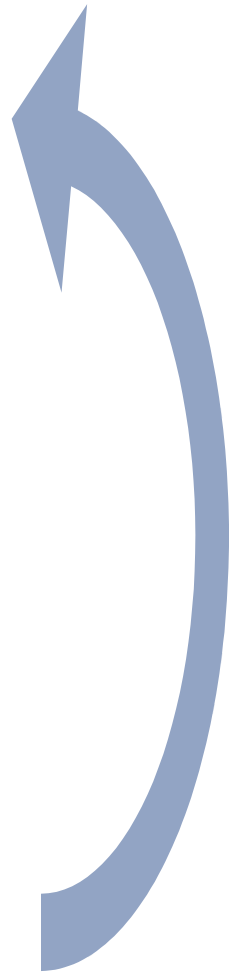
Substantive change reports



Third-party complaints



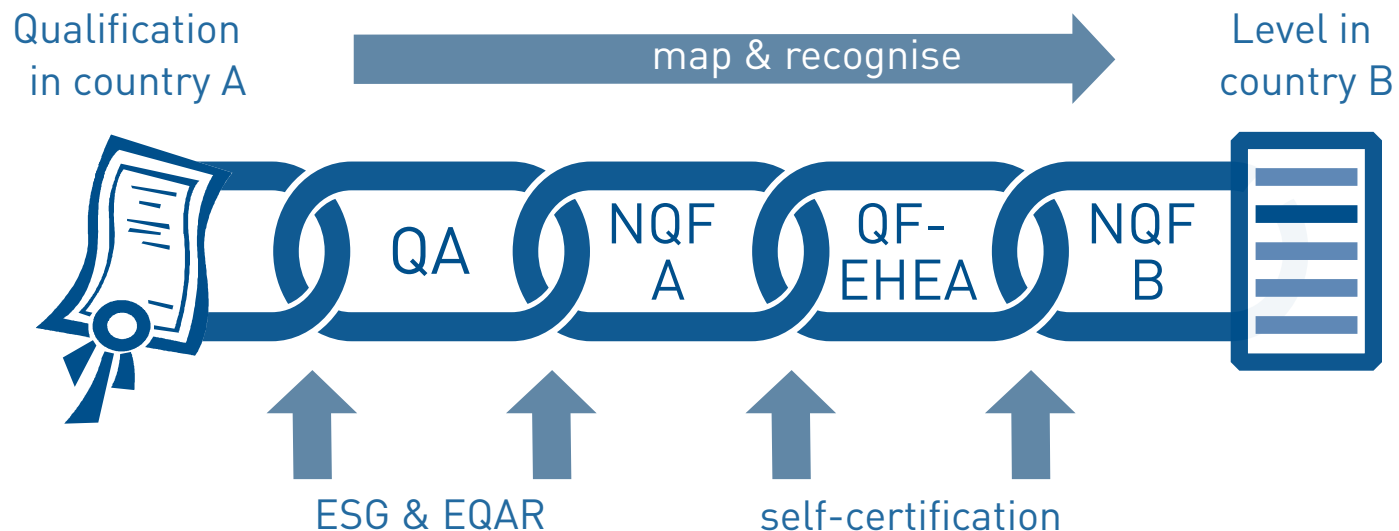
Periodic renewal every 5 years



## 8. EQAR role in the EHEA



- Transparency of and trust in external QA in line with ESG
- Enable HE institutions to use a suitable EQAR-registered QAA (see Bucharest 2012 & Yerevan 2015)
- European Approach for QA of Joint Programmes (see Yerevan 2015)
- Automatic recognition of qualifications



## 9. Work Plan 2016/17



- Strategic Goal 1: International Trust and Recognition
  - Implementation of the ESG 2015
  - Developments in Cross-Border QA
  - European Approach for QA of Joint Programmes
- Strategic Goal 2: Enhanced Transparency and Information Provision
  - Information on the Work of Registered Agencies
  - Database of Quality-Assured Programmes or HEIs
  - Extended Publication of Decisions

# Overview



Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Broad ownership and support by governments and stakeholders</li><li>• Independence of EQAR and its Register Committee</li><li>• Part of the EHEA infrastructure</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contradictions between ESG and national legislation</li><li>• Ensure consistency despite differences in external reviews</li><li>• Clarify requirements without creating a checklist</li></ul>

Thank you for your attention!

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