

The ESG in Practice in national QA agencies in Europe

Quality Assurance ESG 2015 AND BEYOND

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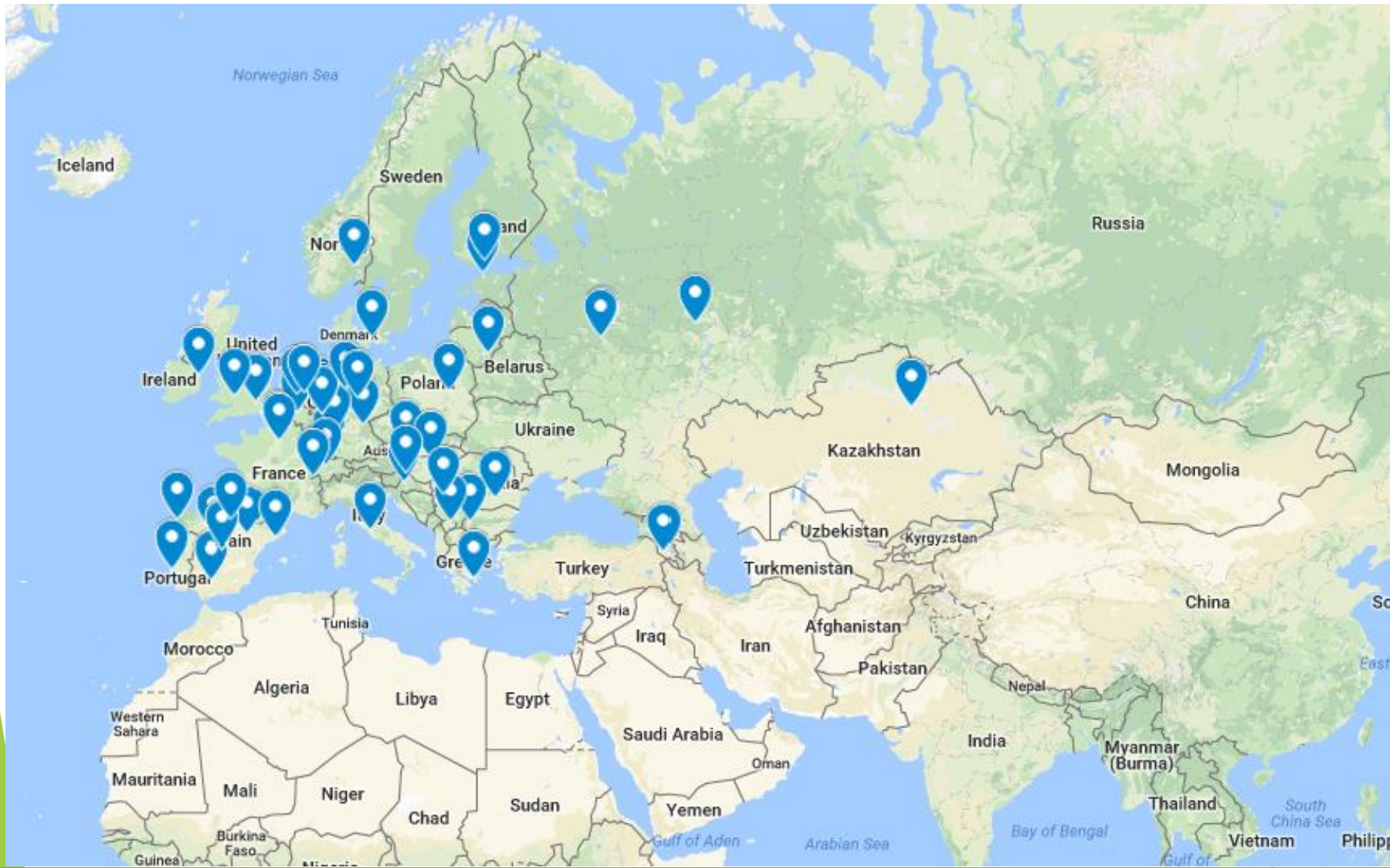
WHY EUROPEAN QUALITY ASSURANCE?

- Bologna Declaration (1999) was to encourage European cooperation in quality assurance of higher education with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies.
- In the Berlin communiqué of 19 September 2003 the Ministers of the Bologna Process signatory states invited the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) *‘through its members, in cooperation with the EUA, EURASHE, and ESIB’*, to develop *‘an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance’* and to *‘explore ways of ensuring an adequate peer review system for quality assurance and/or accreditation agencies or bodies, and to report back through the Bologna Follow-Up Group to Ministers in 2005’*.

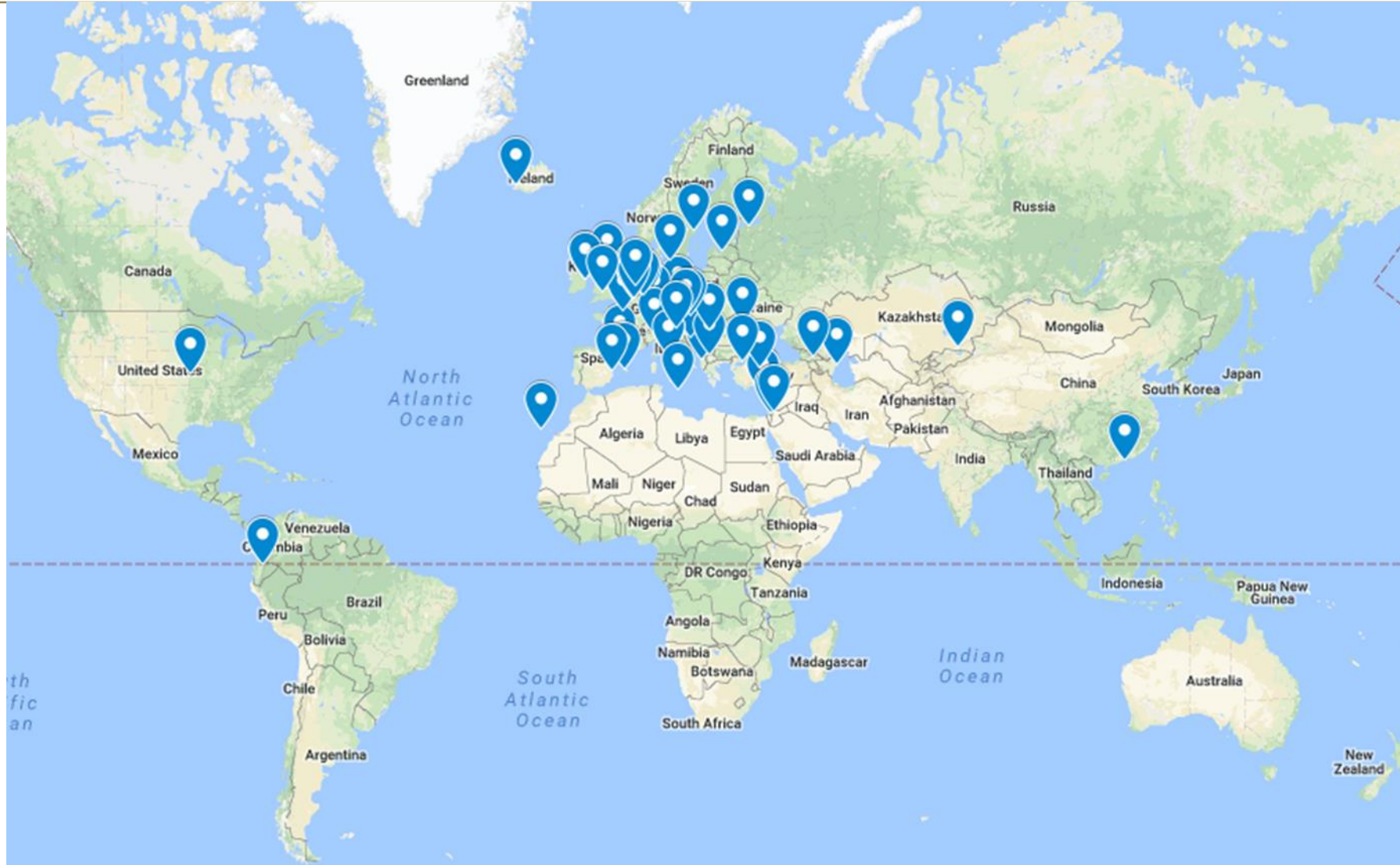
ENQA: European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

- European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)
- Umbrella NGO for European QA agencies
- Network in 2000; association in 2004
- Move from Finland to Belgium 2011
- Structure: Board, General Assembly, Secretariat
- 51 Members in 28 countries
- 54 Affiliates in 31 countries
- Celebration of 15 years of QA in 2015

ENQA: member agencies (51 in 28 countries)



ENQA: affiliates (54 in 31 countries)



ENQA: Strategic plan 2016-2020

VISION

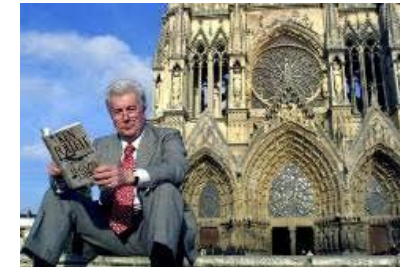
A European Higher Education Area where students have access to high quality education and can achieve qualifications that are respected world-wide.

MISSION

As the largest association of quality assurance agencies committed to agreed European standards, ENQA drives the development of quality assurance by representing agencies internationally, supporting them nationally and providing them with comprehensive services and networking opportunities. ENQA promotes the enhancement of quality and the development of a quality culture in higher education.

UNIBASQ: Basque University System Quality Assurance Agency

SPAIN is divided in 17 autonomous regions. One is the Basque Country, a small region next to the northwest border with France.

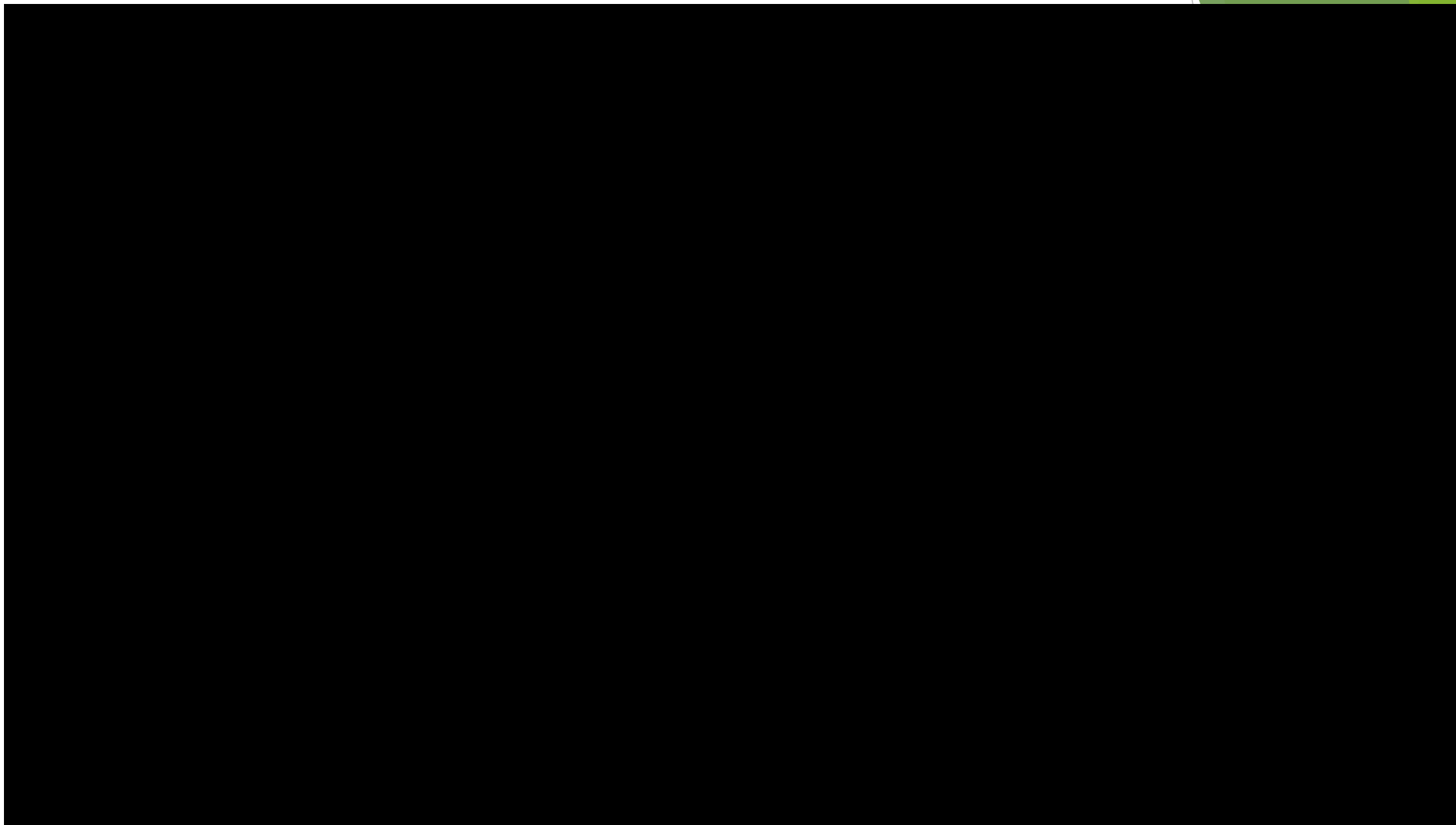


UNIBASQ: Basque University System Quality Assurance Agency

By law, in Spain all official programs (bachelor, master, and PHD) must be accredited by an agency registered in EQAR, which means to comply the European Standards guidelines (ESG).

Basque Country, and some other regions (Catalonia, Galicia among others) have their own agencies in EQAR and ENQA. The rest is covered by ANECA.

Unibasq is founded in 2005...



UNIBASQ: FROM 2005 TO 2018

2010: Decision of becoming a member of ENQA and EQAR

2011: Change of law to clarify the independence and the resources of the agency and the role of students

2014: registration in EQAR and member of ENQA

ENQA report made under the 2005 ESG

RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED WITH 2005 ESG

ESG 2005: Part 2: external quality assurance

2.1 Use of internal quality assurance procedures

2.2 Development of external quality assurance processes

2.3 Criteria for decisions

2.4 Processes fit for purpose (students role)

2.5 Reporting

2.6 Follow-up procedures

2.7 Periodic reviews

2.8 System-wide analyse

ESG 2005: Part 3. external quality assurance agencies

3.1 Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education

3.2 Official status

3.3 Activities (increase of International role)

3.4 Resources (stability and diversification)

3.5 Mission statement

3.6 Independence

3.7 External quality assurance criteria and processes used by the agencies

3.8 Accountability procedures

ESG 2015

| Policy for quality assurance | Standards for external quality assurance | Standards and guidelines for quality assurance agencies |
|---|--|---|
| 1.1 Policy for quality assurance | 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance | 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance |
| 1.2 Design and approval of programmes | 2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose | 3.2 Official status |
| 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment | 2.3 Implementing processes | 3.3 Independence |
| 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification | 2.4 Peer-review experts | 3.4 Thematic analysis |
| 1.5 Teaching staff | 2.5 Criteria for outcomes | 3.5 Resources |
| 1.6 Learning resources and student support | 2.6 Reporting | 3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct |
| 1.7 Information management | 2.7 Complaints and appeals | 3.7 Cyclical external review of agencies |
| 1.8 Public information | | |
| 1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes | | |
| 1.10 Cyclical external quality | | |

Main recommendations related with:

- ▶ Procedures: integrate the key findings leading to conclusions more explicitly in the reports. Simplification.
- ▶ Broaden the intended readership of reports. Stakeholders involvement. Students role.
- ▶ Internal monitoring, analyse strengths and weaknesses in the presented self-evaluation reports.
- ▶ Internationalization: committees and active role in ENQA

DURING 2015, UNIBASQ MADE A SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), USING ENQA'S REPORT, INTERNAL AND STAKEHOLDERS' POINTS OF VIEW

UNIBASQ: New Strategic Plan 2016-2019

VISION

Helpful agent for the improvement of the Basque University System quality, its internationalization and social projection.

An interlocutor between Basque universities, stakeholders or system users, the university policy makers and external agents that are fed on university results.


Recognized up to international level as an advisory and assurance agency of the university quality.

MISSION

Promote the innovation and improvement in the Basque University System (BUS), satisfying ESG 2015, member of ENQA and EQAR.

Advices, evaluates and guarantees the institutions of the system, their study-programmes and the teaching staff, independently and objectively.

Develops the activity in any other university system that might be interested.

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- ▶ Axe 1: Services: Consultancy and Assessment
 - ▶ Axe 2: Social Influence: Communication, Collaboration with Institutions, Quality Agencies and Social Agents
 - ▶ Axe 3: Agency's Internationalization Backing the Basque University System
 - ▶ Axe 4: Internal Organization, Management, Planning and Human Resources

UNIBASQ CONSEQUENCES

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION (2.1 STANDARD)

| AUDIT- INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION | E.S.G. 2005 | E.S.G. 2015 |
|--|--|---|
| Dimension 1.0. How the Faculty/Institution defines its quality politics and aims | 1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance | 1.1 Policy for quality assurance |
| Dimension 1.1. How the Faculty/Institution guarantees the quality of teaching programs. | 1.2. Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards | 1.2. Design and approval of programmes 1.9. On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes 1.10. Cyclical external quality assurance |
| Dimension 1.2. How the Faculty/Institution orientates teaching to students. | 1.3. Assessment of students | 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification |
| Dimension 1.3. How the Faculty/Institution guarantees and improves quality of academic staff. | 1.4. Quality assurance of teaching staff | 1.5. Teaching staff |
| Dimension 1.4. How the Faculty/Institution manages and improves services and material resources. | 1.5. Learning resources and student support | 1.6. Learning resources and student support |
| Dimension 1.5. How the Faculty/Institution analyzes and take into account results. | 1.6. Information systems | 1.7. Information management |
| Dimension 1.6. How the Faculty/Institution publishes academic programs information. | 1.7. Public information | 1.8. Public information |

Results in Unibasq

- ▶ Internationalization of committees
- ▶ Role of students and stakeholders
- ▶ Thematic analysis (employability, social impact measures, institutional ac.)
- ▶ Transparency of reports, Appeals and complaints committee

BUT ALSO, IMPORTANT TO TAKE

- ▶ Part of working European groups to reflect about QA

International collaboration

- ▶ Listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) since November 2014;
- ▶ Full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) since September 2014.
- ▶ Since October 2016 Unibasq's Director is part of ENQA's Board;
- ▶ Member of the European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education (ECA) since December 2015;
- ▶ Full member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) since 2013.

Quality assessment in Europe. Present

- B. Stensaker (2003) Trance, Transparency and Transformation: The impact of external quality monitoring on higher education, Quality in Higher Education.

Effects of external quality monitoring (EQM)

- Increase of institutional transparency
- Increase of attention towards the quality of teaching
- more autonomous role for the institutional management
- Role of stakeholders, students

BUT also

- Higher education institutions have become more 'bureaucratic'
 - Academics often reported that they felt like being 'inspected'
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Quality assessment in Europe. Stages

- Åse Gornitzka & Bjørn Stensaker (2014) The dynamics of European regulatory regimes in higher education — Challenged prerogatives and evolutionary change, Policy and Society

Stages in quality assessment, **SINCE BOLOGNA**

- 1) National level, formalization and professionalization of regulation along with the establishment of specialized government agencies with a semi-independent status. **(Status, competences, relation with HE laws)**
- 2) The developments of European standards and the introduction of a network of national quality assurance agencies as well as a set of common standards as the centrepiece of a European-wide and multi-level EQA regime. **(European networks of QA)**

In progress..

- 3) Current developments point towards an emerging global market-based system of EQA regulation. **(Recognition between countries, between QAAs, between HEIs)**

International collaboration

- ▶ Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR). This project was selected for EU co-funding under Erasmus+ Key Action 3 - European Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects.

Development of a database that will enhance access to reports and decisions on higher education institutions/programmes externally reviewed against the ESG, by an EQAR-registered agency. The database is expected to enable a broad range of users, including but not limited to:

- ▶ Recognition information centres (ENIC-NARICs)
- ▶ Recognition officers in higher education institutions
- ▶ Students
- ▶ Quality assurance agencies
- ▶ Ministry representatives and other national authorities

to satisfy their information needs and support different types of decisions.

International collaboration

- ▶ Facilitating implementation of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (ImpEA).

Support efficient implementation of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes. This aim will be achieved by successful completion of the following objectives:

- ▶ Identifying key obstacles in implementation of the European Approach in the European Higher Education Area in general, and specifically in project partner countries;
- ▶ Supporting partner QA agencies in running EA-based programme accreditation procedures (ex ante and ex post);
- ▶ Supporting partner HEI in pursuing the external accreditation based on the European Approach;
- ▶ Developing an EA implementation toolkit (set of recommendations and proposed solutions for the policy makers and QA agencies).

International collaboration

- ▶ At the end of 2016, Unibasq joined [ENQA's Working group VII on Quality Assurance and Recognition](#), which is currently finished and has its continuation in the [Linking Academic Recognition and Quality Assurance - LIREQA project](#) where Unibasq collaborates. LIREQA aims at contributing to fair recognition of qualifications by developing recommendations to relate academic recognition to both internal and external quality assurance.
- ▶ Agreements with other European QAAs to train and exchange foreign academic members of committees. AQAS, Germany; HCERES and CET in France.

International services

- ▶ Unibasq has established relationships and agreements to accredit programs and universities in Latin-America. Mainly with those having close relation with the Basque University System. In Republica Dominicana (UASD), Guatemala (U. Rafael Landivar) and Chile (U. of Aconcagua) mainly.
- ▶ The procedure is mostly the same used for our regular expost accreditation procedure and the evaluation criteria which are in line with the ESG are an adaptation to the national law.

CONCLUSION and CHALLENGES

- ▶ ESG 2015 has provided a common framework for European agencies that has improved the role of agencies.
- ▶ European networks sharing problems and looking for solutions
- ▶ The cooperation between agencies and universities through international projects enables to reflect the effect of QA and enhance the common instruments to reach a better European system

BEYOND ESG???

- ▶ **Seals to recognize special programs and/or institutions at international level (internationalization, methodologies, work-based learning, employability)**
- ▶ **Social responsibility?, environmental issues, gender, immigration, and so for.**

ESKERRIK ASKO!

¡GRACIAS!

MERCI!

THANK YOU!

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