

1. European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG)

The ESG are the common framework for internal and external quality assurance in all 48 countries of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Adopted by the EHEA's ministers responsible for higher education, the ESG aim at supporting mutual trust, thus facilitating recognition and mobility within the EHEA. Together with the Qualifications Framework for the EHEA, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) the ESG constitute the building blocks of the EHEA.

The ESG build on the principle that higher education institutions themselves have the primary responsibility for quality of their provision, thus stressing the importance of internal quality assurance, complemented by external accreditation, evaluation or audit. The ESG underline that stakeholders should be involved in designing and implementing quality assurance processes; also the ESG themselves were drafted by the European stakeholders in partnership.

Ministers identified quality assurance in line with the ESG as a key commitment in building the EHEA, underlining that external quality assurance should be performed by independent quality assurance agencies that demonstrably comply with the ESG.

Further information:

<https://www.eqar.eu/kb/esg/>

2. European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR)

The European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) was founded in 2008 as the EHEA's official register of those quality assurance agencies that have demonstrated their compliance with the ESG.

EQAR enhances transparency by clear information on reliable and trustworthy quality assurance agencies operating in Europe. In doing so, EQAR aims to promote trust and facilitate the recognition of both quality assurance results and qualifications across Europe and beyond.

Ministers welcomed the idea of such a register already when adopting the ESG in 2005. In line with the spirit of the ESG, they entrusted the key European stakeholders – higher education institutions represented by EUA and EURASHE, students represented by ESU and quality assurance agencies represented by ENQA – with developing and founding EQAR as a new, independent organisation. EQAR is governed jointly by stakeholders and European governments, including the ministries of education from 41 of the 48 EHEA countries as members.

Quality assurance agencies undergo an external review against the ESG in order to be registered. While full reviews take place cyclically every 5 years, agencies report to EQAR regularly on their activities and on changes to the way in which they work.

The Register currently features 46 quality assurance agencies from 23 EHEA countries, which have reviewed tens of thousands of study programmes and higher education institutions in line with the ESG.

Further information:

<https://www.eqar.eu/about/>

3. Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR)

In May 2018, EQAR launched a new pan-European Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR) in a move to make quality assurance reports and decisions more easily accessible and understandable.

Understandably, most people are interested in the quality of a higher education institution or study programme, rather than in information on quality assurance agencies as such. While the ESG have always required that agencies publish their reports, they were not always easy to track down: you would need to look at 46 registered agencies, find out which agency might have reported on the institution or programme of your interest (in many countries several agencies carry out evaluation or accreditation), and find your way around on their website, which might be available in the national language only.

Especially now that European ministers have set out to realise automatic recognition of qualifications, different users – and not only experts – will need a simple way to see that a higher education institution or programme was quality assured in line with the ESG. EQAR therefore developed DEQAR to gather all registered agencies’ reports and to provide a one-stop shop.

DEQAR already includes 9 737 on 1 624 higher education institutions from 56 countries. For 12 EHEA countries, DEQAR covers all or most higher education institutions, see Figure. Country profiles for each EHEA country are embedded to contextualise the information on QA reports. We expect that DEQAR will grow to 20 000 reports by the end of 2019.

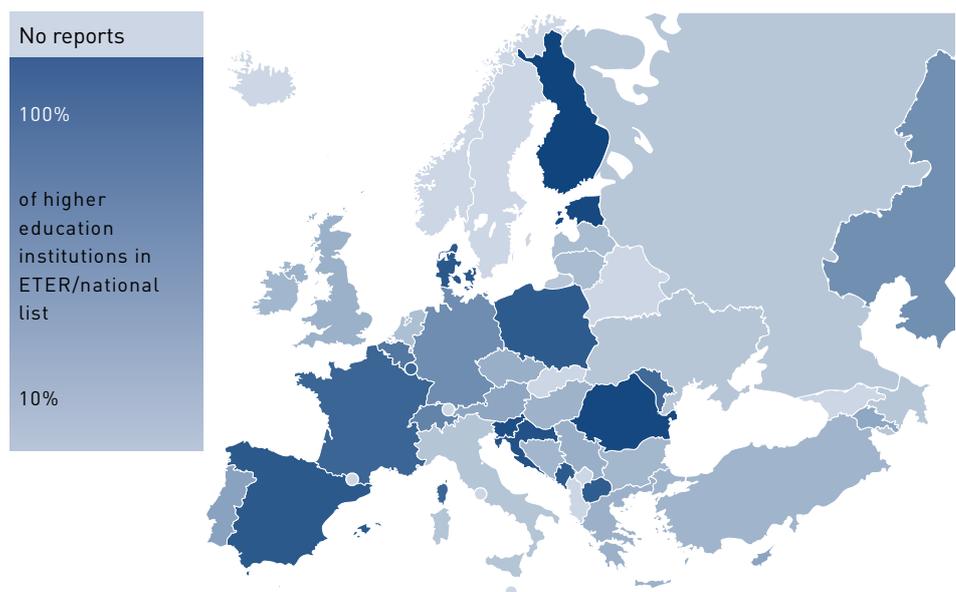


Figure 1: DEQAR coverage (institutions with reports)

In addition to many European partners, DEQAR also includes reports on higher education institutions from 5 Asian partners in the ASEM Education Process: a couple of universities in [Australia](#), [China](#), [Indonesia](#), [Kyrgyzstan](#) and [Mongolia](#) were evaluated or accredited by EQAR-registered agencies.

DEQAR provides easy access to external QA results across Europe and maps the diversity of external quality assurance frameworks in Europe for a broad range of users. DEQAR gives agencies, institutions and countries more exposure of its work, and can be used as a basis for Europe-wide studies, allowing researches to tap into thousands of quality assurance reports.

Browse or search the database at: <https://www.deqar.eu>

[all figures as of 24/05/2019]