

2009 Bologna Stocktaking findings on Quality Assurance

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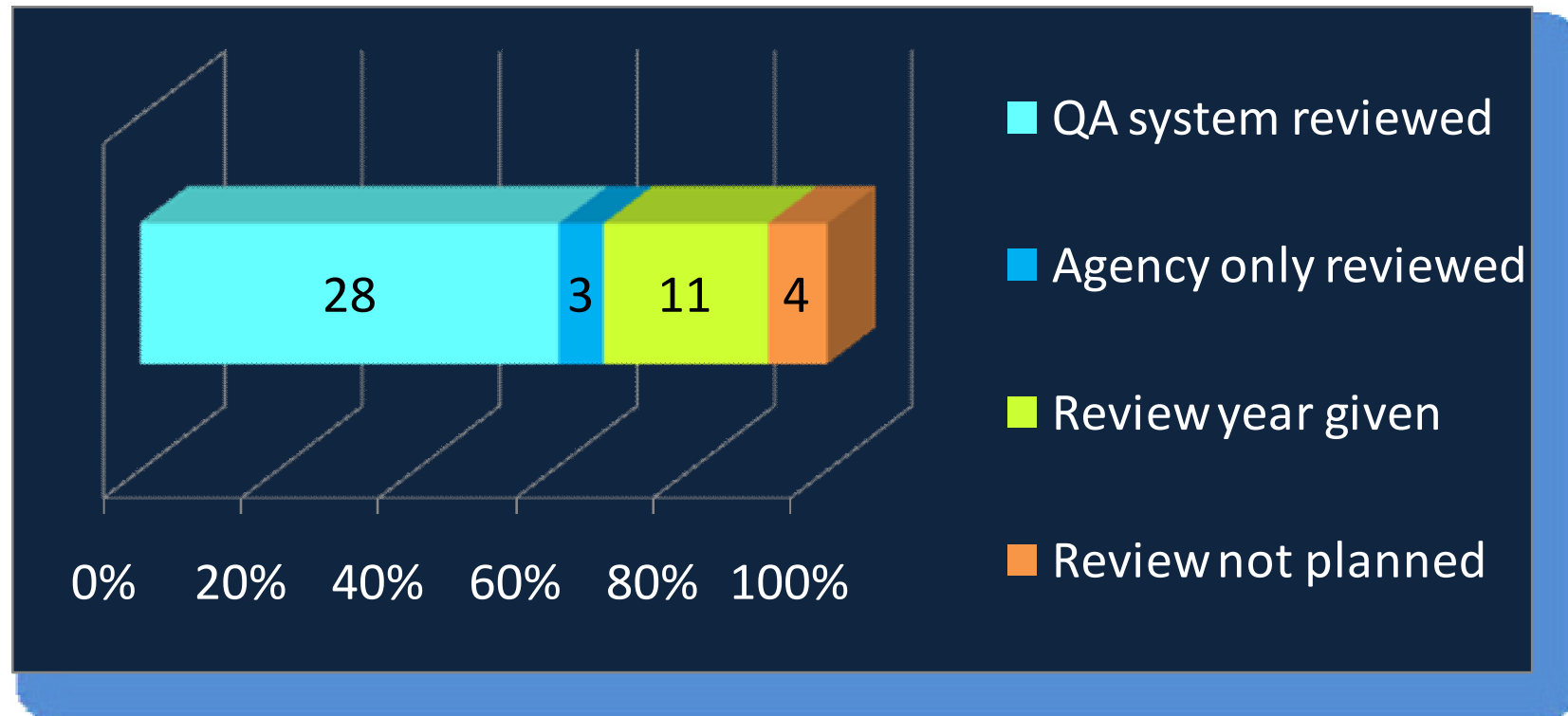
Chair of the Bologna Stocktaking Working group

EUA Quality Forum, Copenhagen, Denmark, 19-21 Nov, 2009

Bologna Process Stocktaking 2009

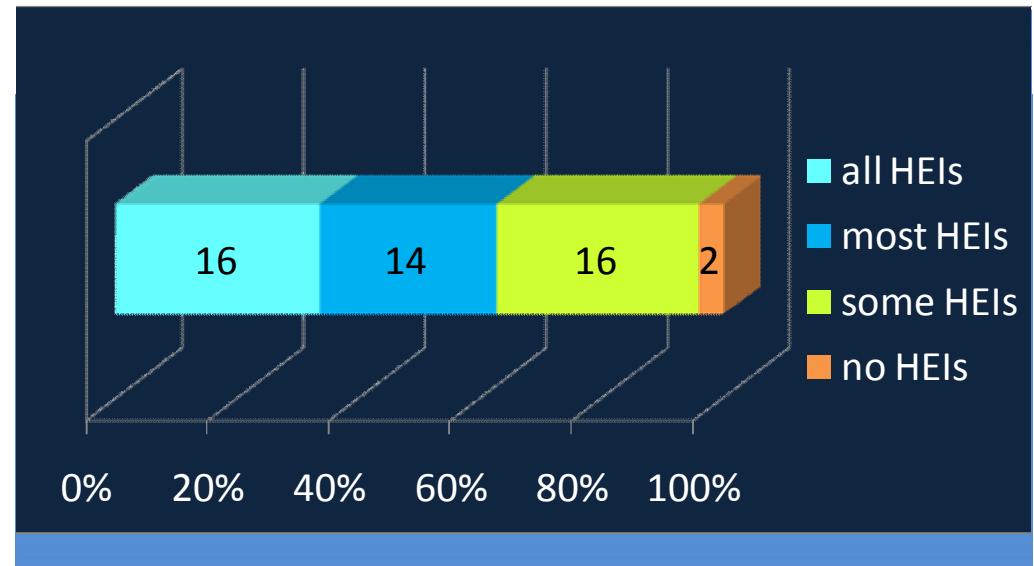
- Based on National Reports of 46 countries
- Criteria and questionnaire approved by the Bologna Follow-up group
- In cooperation with
 - EUA Trends team, ESU student review team, Eurydice,
 - Data collection group (Eurostat/Eurostudent)
 - Bologna working groups on Social dimension, Mobility, Global dimension, Qualifications Frameworks etc.

Reviewing national QA system against ESG



- The task to reviews QA against ESG was set in 2005
- Only just above half have reviewed
- Only 11 explicitly state that internal QA is reviewed

Internal QA strategy at HEIs



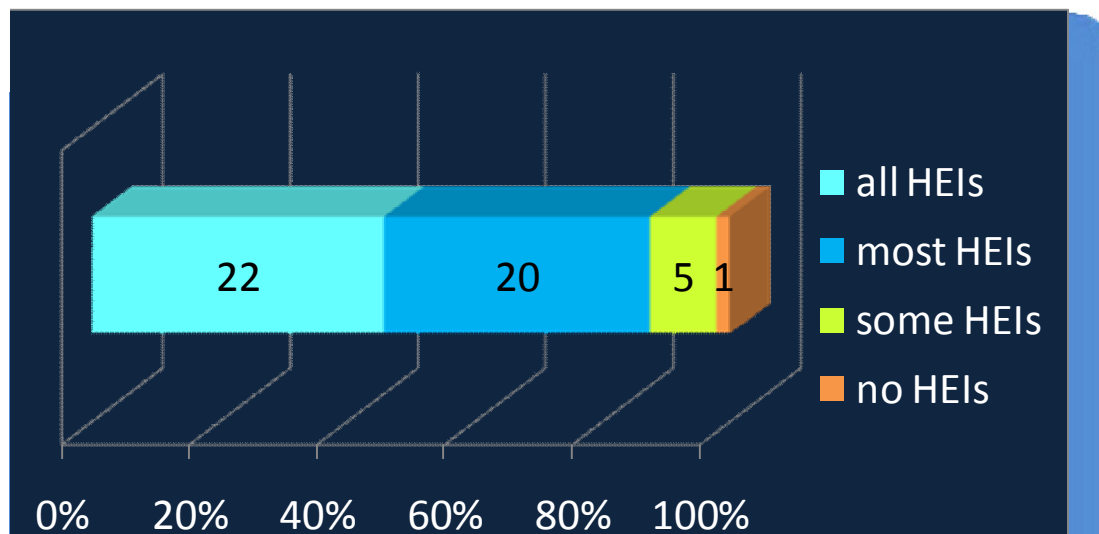
- in 1/3 of the countries all HEIs publish QA Strategy
- In several countries HEIs "are not obliged to publish strategy"
- In others QA "is part of overall strategy"
- In another group of countries HEIs have to prepare strategic plans according to ministry strategy

Internal QA – overall findings

- Requirement to create internal QA systems often is embedded into national laws, regulations or codes
- Some countries see internal QA as preparing self-assessment reports only
- quality of teaching is often mentioned, but without notion of learning and learning outcomes.
- in binary HE systems the establishment of an internal QA within HEI may be required for the applied HE sector but not to universities
- in some countries internal QA in their HEIs may be based on ISO, EFQM, various TQM-based quality management methodologies or self-developed ones.

Internal approval of programmes

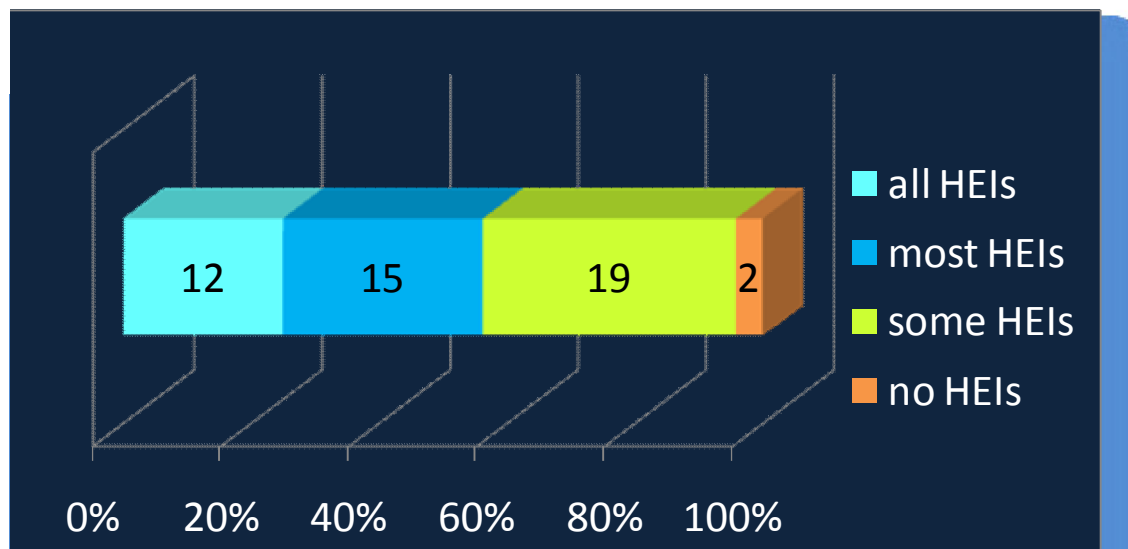
- Monitoring can be done by programme committees including staff and students (and employers) in some countries,
- Or organised as internal audit and training staff to act as auditors
- Assessment can also be based on student questionnaires, feedback from alumni or both
- In a number of countries internal QA is modelled on the external QA: using self-assessment reports of



programmes and
review by peers

Learning outcomes of programmes

- Even if 21 countries confess that only some or no HEIs have described programmes in LOs the answers seem too optimistic
- Countries themselves often mention that the LOs used
- “are not related to Dublin descriptors” or “not in the understanding of Tuning”
- This indicates that confusing LOs with overall goals of the programme is still going on



Learning outcomes

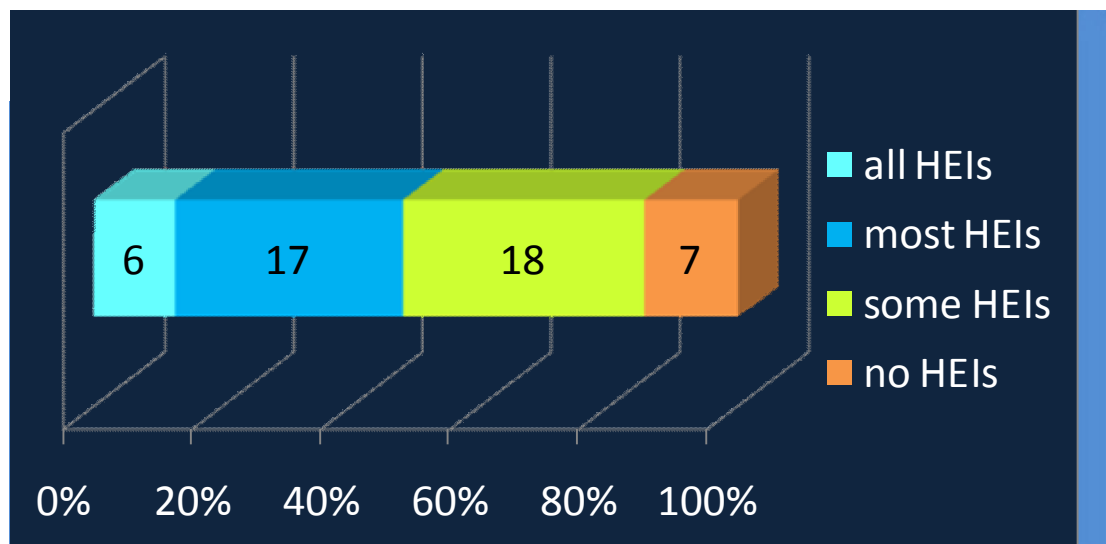
learning outcomes are understood as important priority underpinning progress several other action lines – qualifications frameworks, student-centred learning, ECTS, recognition including recognition of prior learning, i.e. success of lifelong learning

Issues:

- LOs culture is new to many countries
- LOs are sometimes confused with overall goals of subject courses and programs
- LO's are often seen as a separate task and not in an integrated way

Assessment procedures designed to measure achievement of LOs

- Only in 1/8 of the countries it is done in all HEIs
- In more 1/2 the countries it is implemented in just some or no HEIs.
- Answers demonstrate that student assessment based on learning outcomes remains unclear:
 - some understand it as summative assessment;
 - others identified it with general national grading scales with published criteria for each grade



in a couple of cases
as teaching being
assessed by students

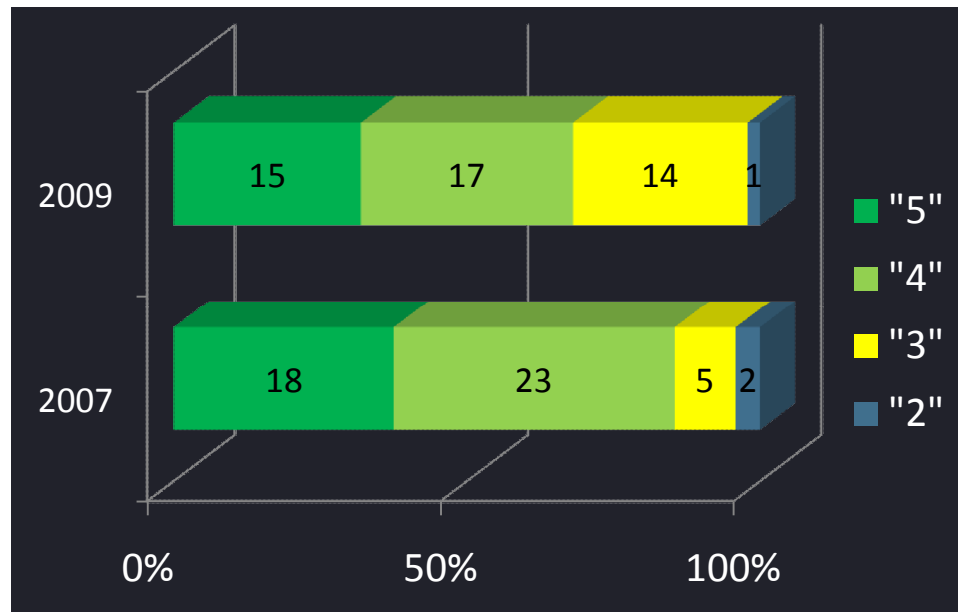
External QA

- All but one countries have an external QA system operating at national level.
- Practically all countries follow the self-assessment/ peer review/ publication of/ follow-up pattern
- QA system often covers all higher education; however in five countries it does not cover either pre-Bologna degrees or short cycle programmes
- In some cases external QA system covers either universities or professional HEIs,
- In others it covers both, but the approach or the agencies in charge are different
- If so, audit of internal QA may be used for universities while accreditation for applied HEIs.

Criteria for external QA

Green (5)	<p>A fully functioning external QA system is in operation at national level and applies to all HE.</p> <p>Evaluation of programmes or institutions includes four elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- self-assessment report- external review- publication of results- follow-up procedures. <p>Peer review of the national QA agency(ies) has been completed according to S&G</p>
Light green (4)	<p>Same but peer review of the national QA agency is not yet carried out</p> <p>A date for evaluation must be set</p>
Yellow (3)	<p>The quality assurance system includes at least two of the above four elements:</p> <p>No date has yet been set for a peer review of the national QA agency(ies).</p>

The formal organisation of external QA is almost there



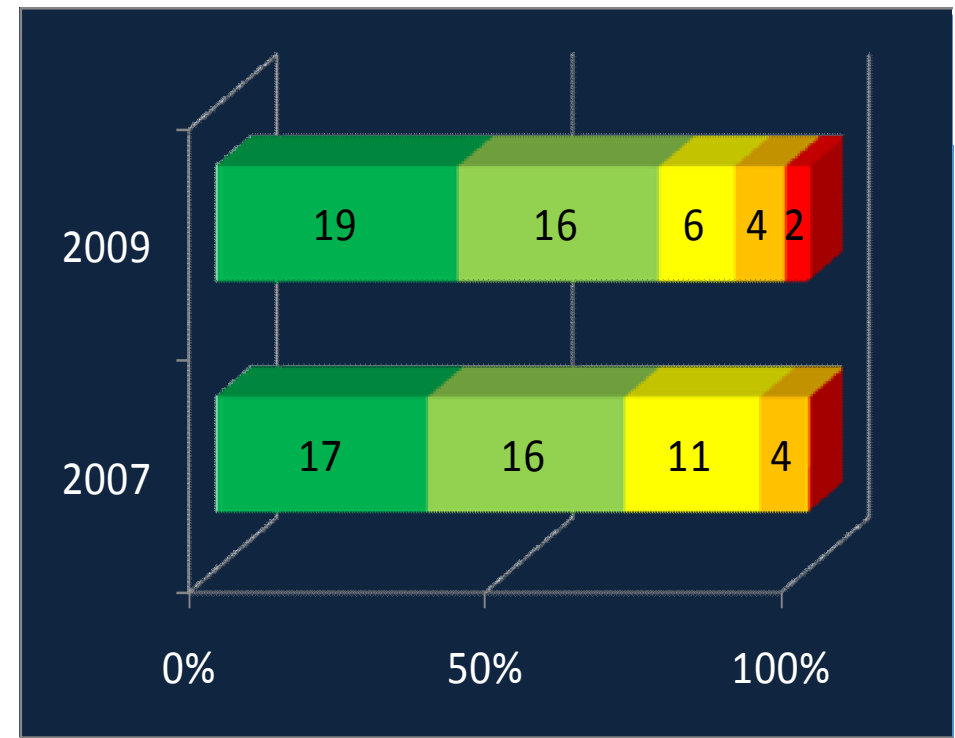
country	QA Ext	country	QA Ext
Albania		Latvia	
Andorra		Liechtenstein	
Armenia		Lithuania	
Austria		Luxembourg	
Azerbaijan		Malta	
Belgium Flemish		Moldova	
Belgium French		Montenegro	
Bosnia Herzeg.		Netherlands	
Bulgaria		Norway	
Croatia		Poland	
Cyprus		Portugal	
Czech Republic		Romania	
Denmark		Russia	
Estonia		Serbia	
Finland		Slovakia	
France		Slovenia	
Georgia		Spain	
Germany		Sweden	
Greece		Switzerland	
Holy See		The FYROM	
Hungary		Turkey	
Iceland		UK - EWNI	
Ireland		UK - Scotland	
Italy		Ukraine	

Criteria for the indicator on student involvement in QA

Green (5)	In all QA reviews, students participate at five levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- in the governance of national bodies for QA- in external review of HEIs and/or programmes: either in expert teams, as observers in expert teams or at the decision making stage,- in consultation with experts during external reviews- in internal QA processes- in preparation of self-assessment reports
Light green (4)	Students participate at four of the five above levels
Yellow (3)	Students participate at three of the five above levels

Results on student involvement in QA

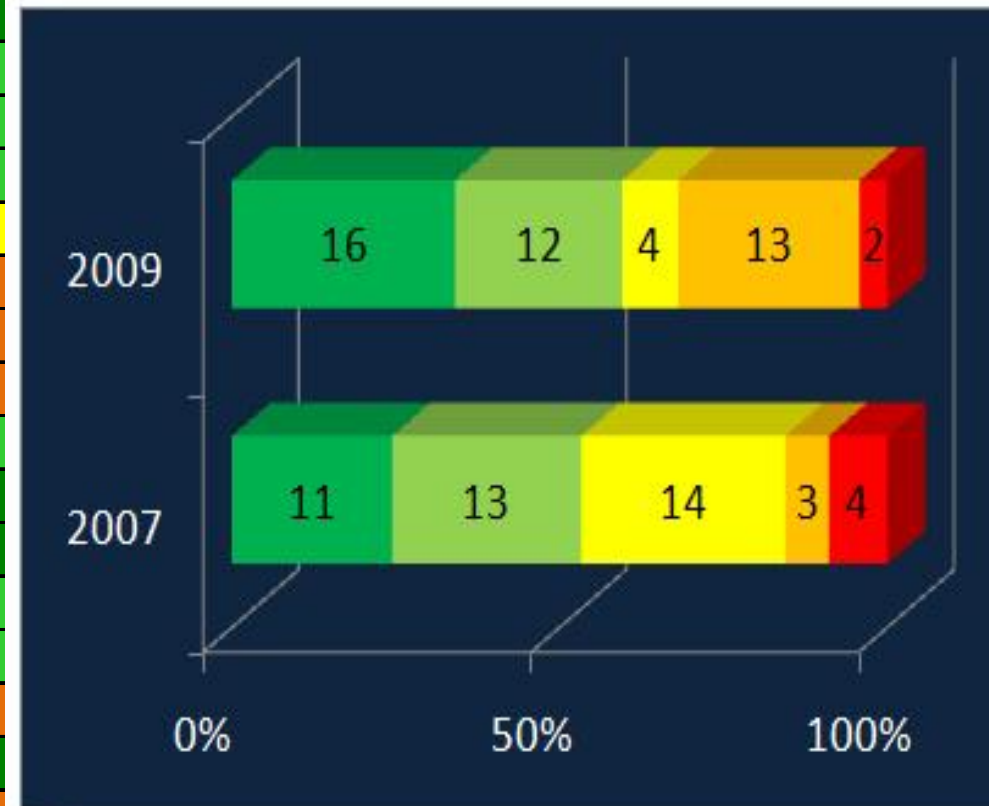
country	QA Stud	country	QA Stud
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Bulgaria		Norway	
Croatia		Poland	
Cyprus		Portugal	
Czech Republic		Romania	
Denmark		Russia	
Estonia		Serbia	
Finland		Slovakia	
France		Slovenia	
Georgia		Spain	
Germany		Sweden	
Greece		Switzerland	
Holy See		The FYROM	
Hungary		Turkey	
Iceland		UK - EWNI	
Ireland		UK - Scotland	
Italy		Ukraine	



Criteria for the indicator on external participation in QA

Green (5)	In all cases, there is international participation at four levels: 1) within teams for external review of HEIs and/or programmes, as members or observers 2) national quality assurance agency membership of ENQA or other international quality assurance network/s 3) in the governance of national bodies for QA 4) in the external evaluation of national QA agencies
Light green (4)	International participation takes place at above levels: 1); 2) AND either 3) or 4)
Yellow (3)	International participation takes place at above levels 1) and 2)
Orange (2)	... takes place either at above level 1) or 2)

country	QA Int	country	QA Int
Albania		Latvia	
Andorra		Liechtenstein	
Armenia		Lithuania	
Austria		Luxembourg	
Azerbaijan		Malta	
Belgium Flemish		Moldova	
Belgium French		Montenegro	
Bosnia Herzeg.		Netherlands	
Bulgaria		Norway	
Croatia		Poland	
Cyprus		Portugal	
Czech Republic		Romania	
Denmark		Russia	
Estonia		Serbia	
Finland		Slovakia	
France		Slovenia	
Georgia		Spain	
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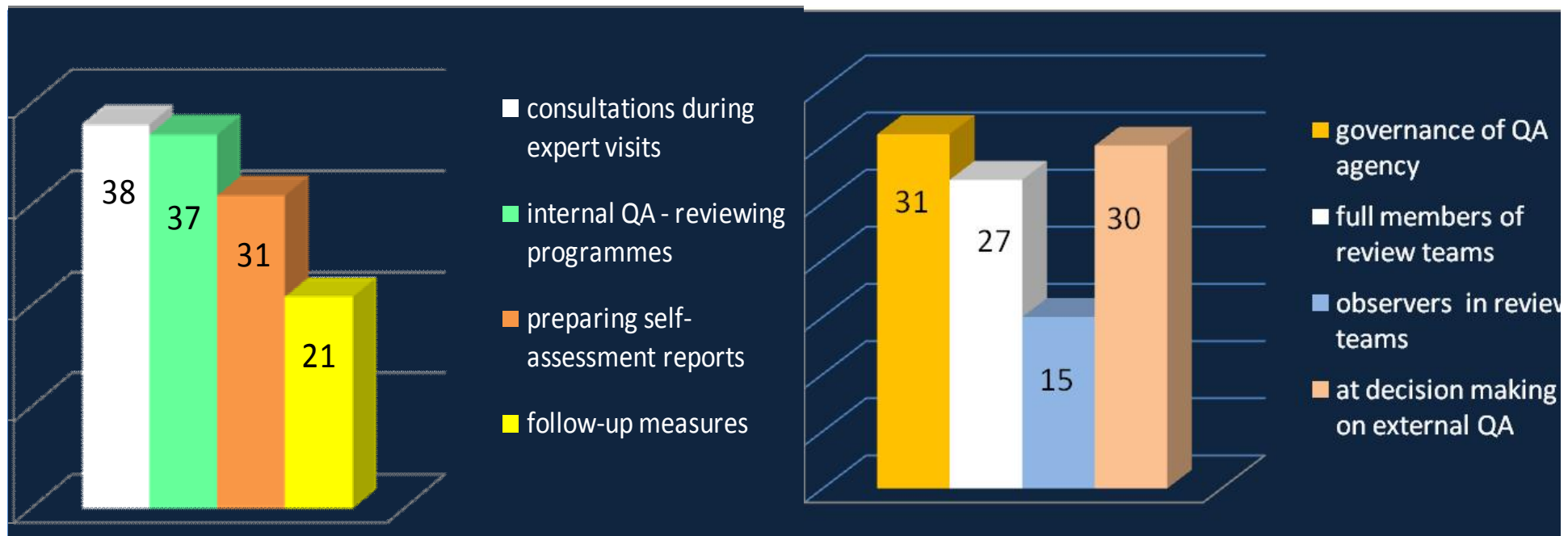


External QA

- In some cases the QA system operates in universities or professional HEIs only, or it covers both sectors, but the approach or the agencies in charge are different for different sectors
- If so, audit of internal QA is used for universities while accreditation for applied HEIs.
- Some of the countries that have small HE systems use QA agencies of neighbouring countries and international peers
- in several countries QA has been introduced as state control rather than in a improvement based way

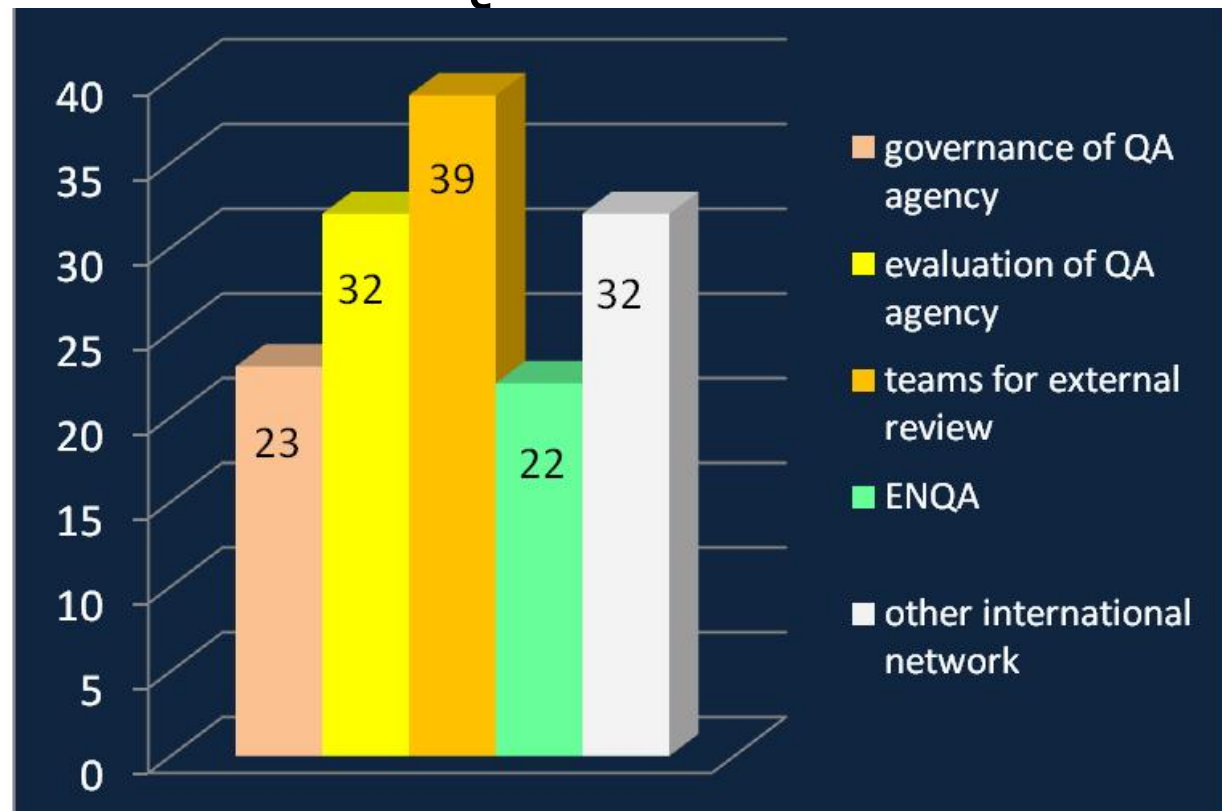
Student involvement in QA

- Overall, student involvement in QA has grown o
- while most countries are fully open to student participation,
- others restrict student participation in some issues governance of QA agency, decision-making
- but some seem to be rather reluctant to student participation in general



International involvement in QA

- Level of international participation is highest in the expert teams,
- Less in the governance of QA agencies
- It is striking that less than half of the national QA agencies are full members of ENQA.



Summary of findings

- When assessing the QA systems against ESG, the main focus is on the external QA.
Part I of the ESG on internal QA is often not considered part of the review.
- Internal QA systems at HEIs are progressing slower than the external QA.
- In most countries HEIs have established internal QA procedures, although some are much stronger than others.

- Internal approval of programmes and assuring staff quality in most countries in one way or other have been established long ago and therefore usually are better developed.
- The most difficult parts are
 - linking programmes with LOs and
 - designing assessment procedures to measureThey will take longer to implement.
- A number of countries do not prescribe particular mechanisms for internal QA in HEIs but rather require that HEIs create them as they see fit

Summary of findings

- All the 'Bologna' countries have introduced external QA systems including self-assessment and external review;
- nearly all publish assessment results and carry out follow-up measures.
- The facts that
 - less than 1/3 of countries had organised assessment of their QA agency and that
 - national QA agencies of more than 1/2 the 'Bologna' countries are not yet full ENQA members

suggests that there is a some way to go before all countries are working according to the ESG.

Summary of findings

Overall, student participation in QA has progressed since 2007. However, students

- do not participate in decision making after the review in a number of countries ,
- are not always involved in preparing self-assessment reports and
- are seldom involved in follow-up measures.

There has been in progress in

- international involvement in external review teams and
- membership of ENQA or other international QA networks

but both should be increased

Suggestions of new areas to be covered by quality assurance

Quality of institutional procedures used for recognition of degrees and study credit points

- Lisbon Recognition Convention, sets clear recognition principles,
- yet the procedures and criteria used are too different
- across EHEA countries,
- between different HEIs of one country
- between different departments inside one HEI.
- Some countries have included recognition qualifications and credits into the scope of both internal and external QA
- assessing whether the criteria and procedures used inside a HEI are in line with the principles of the legal framework of the Lisbon Recognition Convention

Quality of Diploma Supplements

- more HEIs issue Diploma Supplements,
- but quality of the DS issued is diverse.
- DS is often used incorrectly or customized
- ESG also cover the quality of information that HEIs send out. DS is very important piece of information on the qualification
- Taking up the quality assessment of the Diploma Supplements at both internal and external assessments would help improving the use of this important instrument.

Quality of lifelong learning

- LLL is among the important tasks of HEIs.
- 2009 Stocktaking demonstrated that there are just a handful of countries where flexible learning paths and the recognition of prior learning have become an active practice.
- Including those issues in internal and external quality assessments would stimulate action, improve quality locally but also help exchange experiences and share good practice nationally and internationally.

Quality assurance of joint degrees.

- The legal situation of joint degrees has improved in the recent years and
- joint degrees are explicitly mentioned in legislation in already 37 countries.
- However, to fulfil one of the main criteria for recognition of a joint degree - that all parts of the joint programme are quality assessed, requires joint action between the QA agencies of the participating countries.

Thanks for your attention!

Questions for discussion

- What could be done to further promote the S&G with regard to internal QA within HEIs?
- Leadership of HEIs sometimes tend to establish top-down management systems rather than genuine quality culture.
How can we make both ends meet?
- HEIs have the final word on the recognition of foreign credentials. Procedures and criteria used in different countries and at different HEIs within one country are not coherent. A way out could be including institutions' recognition procedures into the aspects evaluated at internal and/or external QA.
How could that work in practice?