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# BUILDING AN ESG-COMPLIANT QA AGENCY: LESSONS LEARNT FROM SEQA-ESG. A VIEW OF AN EXPERT INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT

SEQA-ESG
Supporting European QA Agencies in meeting the ESG

CLOSING WEBINAR
Overcoming obstacles in reaching compliance with the ESG: lessons learnt from the SEQA-ESG project
*Online, Wednesday 23 November 2022*

**THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE**

# ACTIVITIES

- **Peer counselling visits** in Albania and Moldova
  - stakeholders involvement
  - experts
- **Peer-learning** workshop Malta
  - design of methodologies and criteria
  - involvement of students
- **Progress visits** in Slovakia, Czech Republic and Moldova

Action plans implemented!

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# KEY CHALLENGES

- GENERAL
  - Long time commitment from all actors involved
  - Same understanding of objectives and actions
  - Continuous dialogue and cooperation between the actors involved
  - The need for continuity of people involved and of predictability
  - Thorough understanding and fully implementation of standards

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# KEY CHALLENGES

- SPECIFIC
  - Fitness-for-purpose: adaptation at the national context, type and number of procedures, added-value of each procedures balancing with the efforts invested, balance between control – peer-review type external evaluations
  - Independence
  - Student involvement
  - Avoiding conflicts of interest in small countries
  - Publication of reports
  - Appeals and complaints

# ROLE OF NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT

- Set the general framework
- Coherent, considering that the general rules applying for public administration are not always fit in the case of QA agencies and most probably will not foster independence
- Secure the independence of the agencies
- Secure enough resources for the agencies to function properly
- Flexible, give the right balance between issues that must be established at this level and those to be left for the agency to decide
- Always set in collaboration with the agency

**INVEST THE AGENCY WITH TRUST AND RELY ON THEM!**

# LESSONS LEARNT

- Assure commitment, inclusively political, and a critical mass from all actors involved – agency, ministries, HEI, students, academic staff, general public; involve everybody from the very beginning (co-creation)
- Asses the current situation and identify objectives and key areas of action
  - for some it might be needed a long time to be put in practice, so try to work in parallel
  - make sure you speak the same language
- Work continuously and keep a constant dialogue between the parties
- Look for best practices (and things that didn't worked) but adapt them at the national context
- Ask for support and always use opportunities to collaborate
- Publicly communicate progress and challenges

# WHY COMPLYING WITH THE ESG?

- developed by the stakeholders organisations representing students, higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies, under ENQA's coordination, and received endorsement from the governments
- functioned for 17 years, setting the framework for one of the most successful area of reforms within the Bologna process
- the other key commitments – recognition and qualifications rely on quality assurance, together assuring on one hand compatibility between the higher education systems in the EHEA, and fostering mobility; and on the other hand, setting the foundation for quality education

## BECAUSE IT WORKS…

# THANK YOU

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