

CRISTINA GHITULICA  
ENQA VICE-PRESIDENT

# ENQA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM ACROSS EUROPE AND BEYOND

Conference on Higher Education: The impact of QA  
Mechanisms on establishing a quality culture

Supported by:



With funding from  
 Austrian  
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**HERAS**  
Higher Education, Research  
and Applied Science **Plus**

**enqa.**

# ENQA IN BRIEF



## How we were founded

Network in 2000, after the Bologna Declaration



## Who we are

Membership association of QA agencies:

56 members

49 affiliates



## What we do

Represent interests of members

Provide services to members and stakeholders

Drive development of external QA



## How we do it

Policy input

Projects

Events

Publications

Working groups

Agency reviews

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## THE BOLOGNA PROCESS

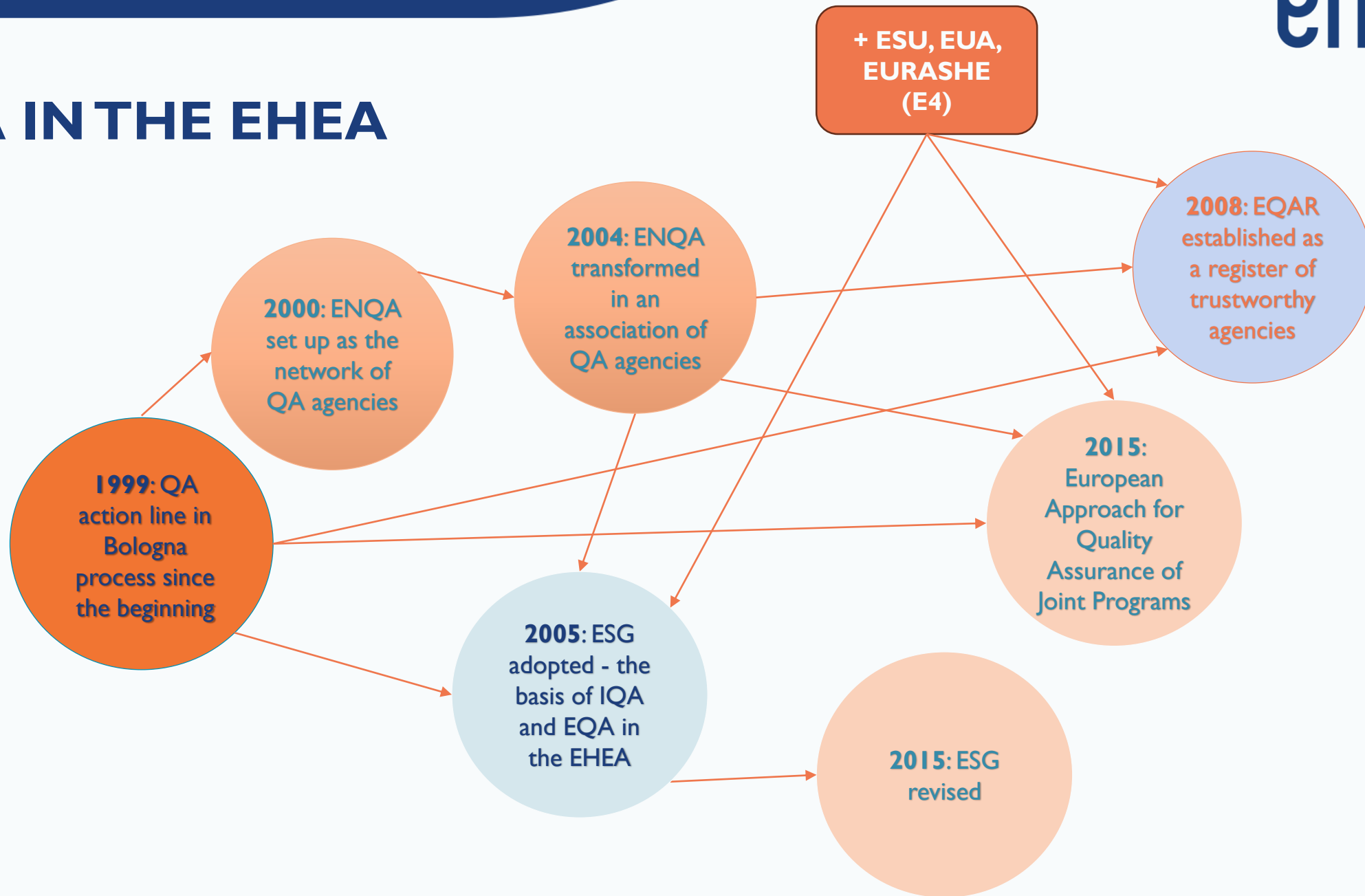
- Europe of knowledge.
- Greater compatibility and comparability of the systems of higher education:
  - ⊗ *promotion of European co-operation in **quality assurance** with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies*
  - ⊗ easily readable and comparable **degrees**
  - ⊗ two main **cycles**
  - ⊗ system of **credits** (ECTS)
  - ⊗ **mobility** for students and staff
  - ⊗ European dimensions in higher education.

1988  
Magna Charta  
Universitatum

1998  
Sorbonne  
Declaration

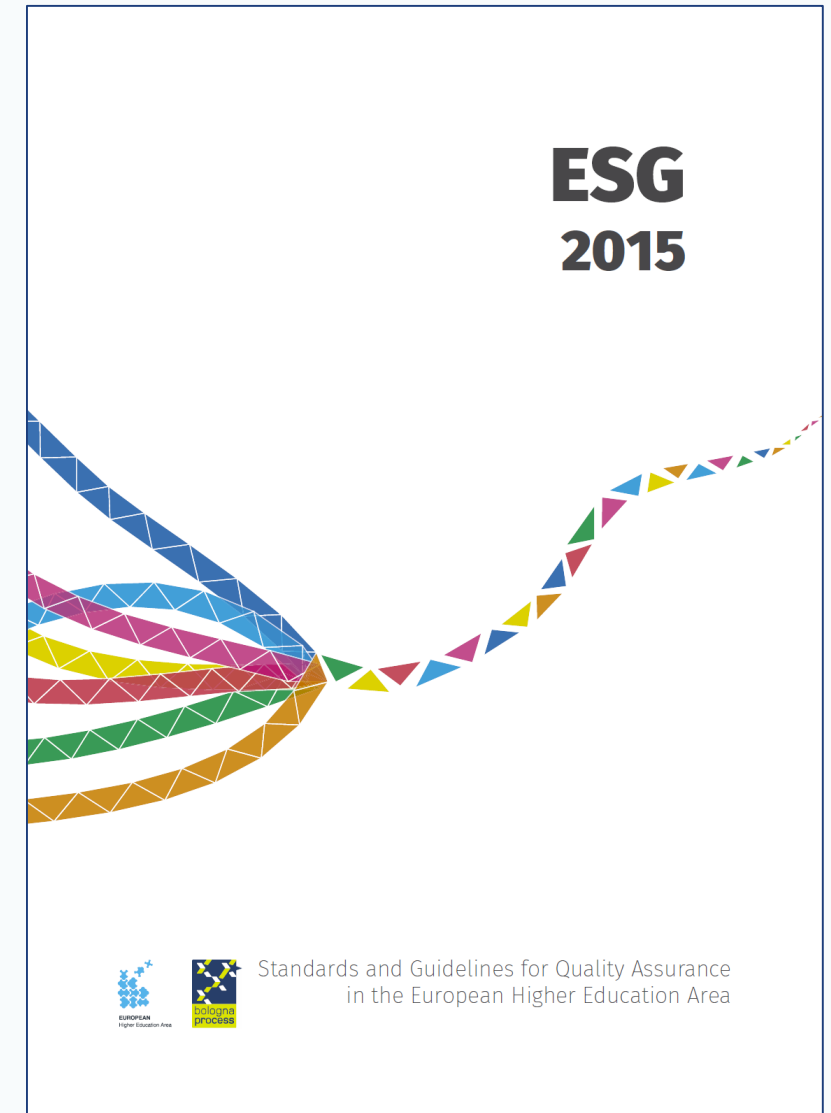
1999  
The Bologna Process  
Bologna declaration  
signed by 29 states

# QA IN THE EHEA



## QA IN THE EHEA

- **They set a common framework** for quality assurance systems for learning and teaching at European, national and institutional level;
- **They enable the assurance and improvement of quality** of higher education in the European higher education area;
- **They support mutual trust**, thus facilitating recognition and mobility within and across national borders;
- **They provide information on quality assurance** in the EHEA.





# The European Higher Education Area in 2020

*Bologna Process Implementation Report*



*The development of higher education quality assurance systems has been one of the **most significant features and drivers of change** in the EHEA.*

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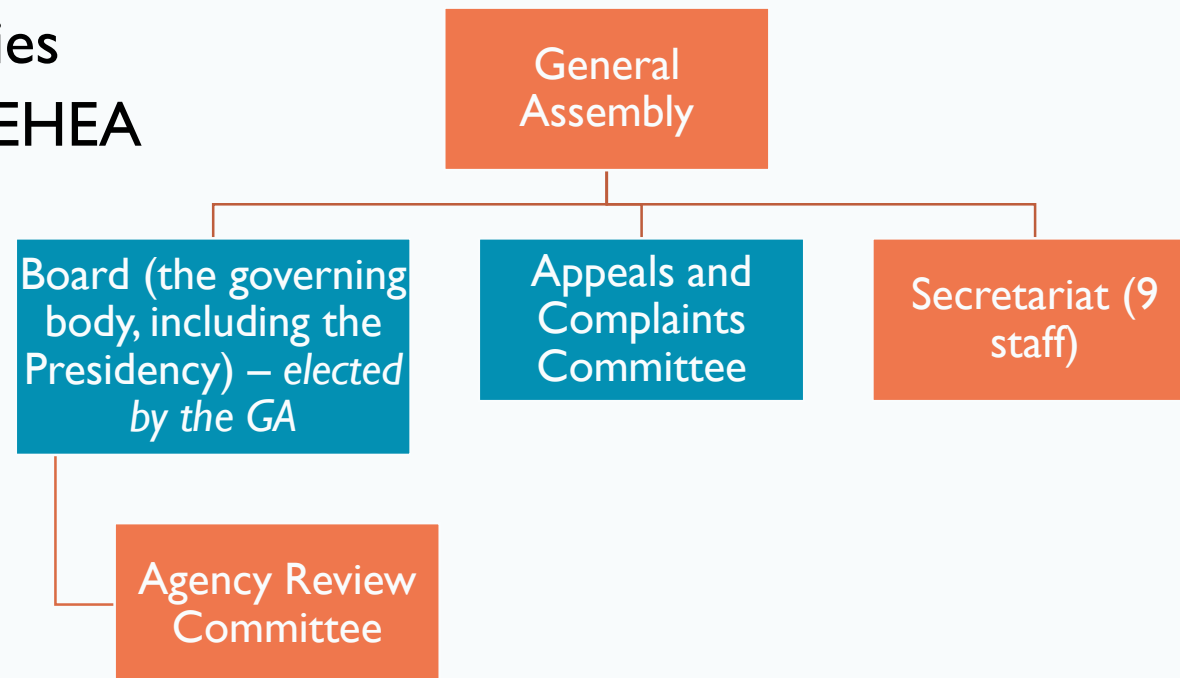
Working groups

Agency reviews

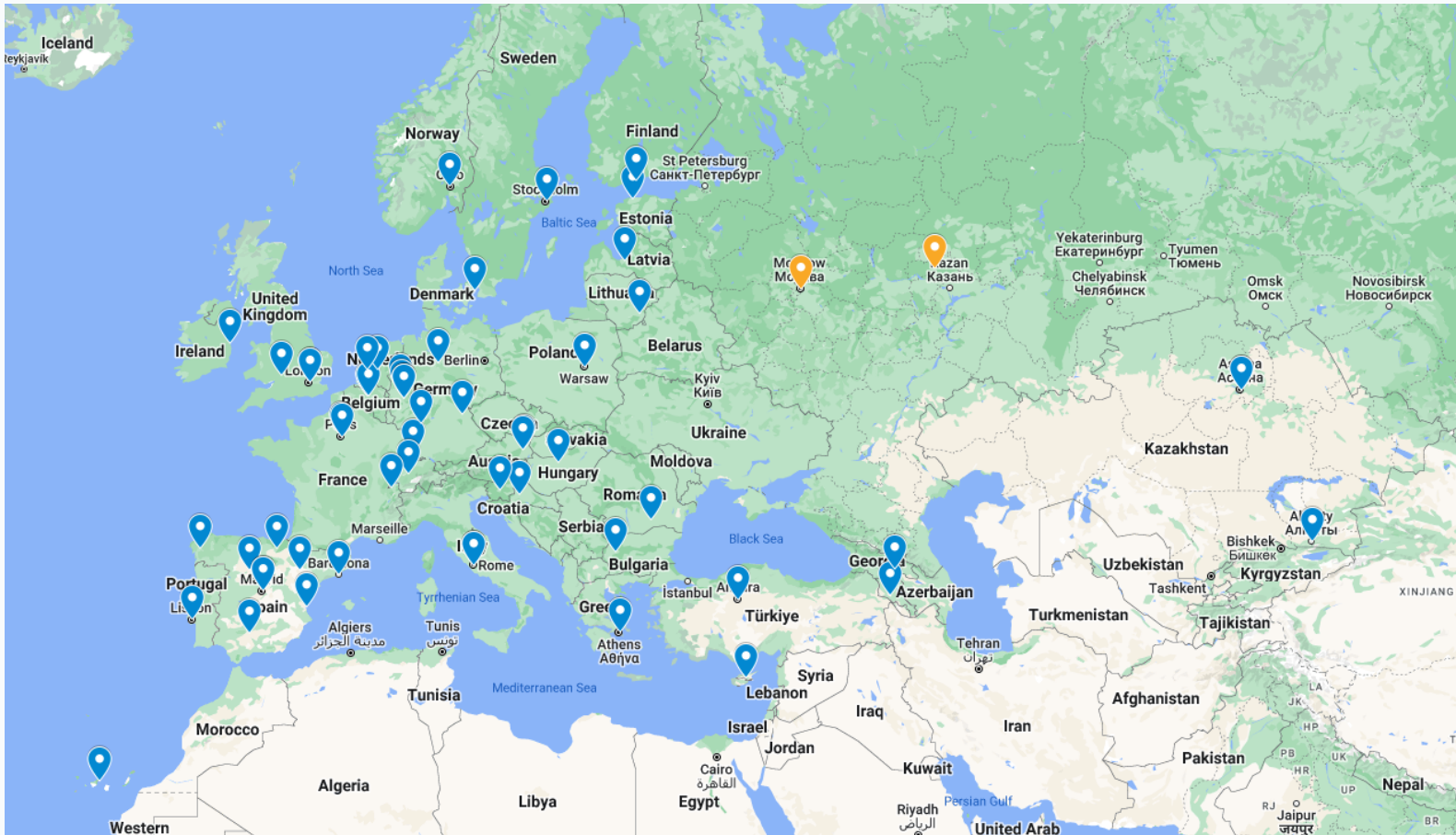


# WHO WE ARE

- Umbrella NGO (Belgium) for European QA agencies
- Membership organisation
  - 45 out of the 47 EHEA countries
  - 8 other countries outside the EHEA
- Structure:

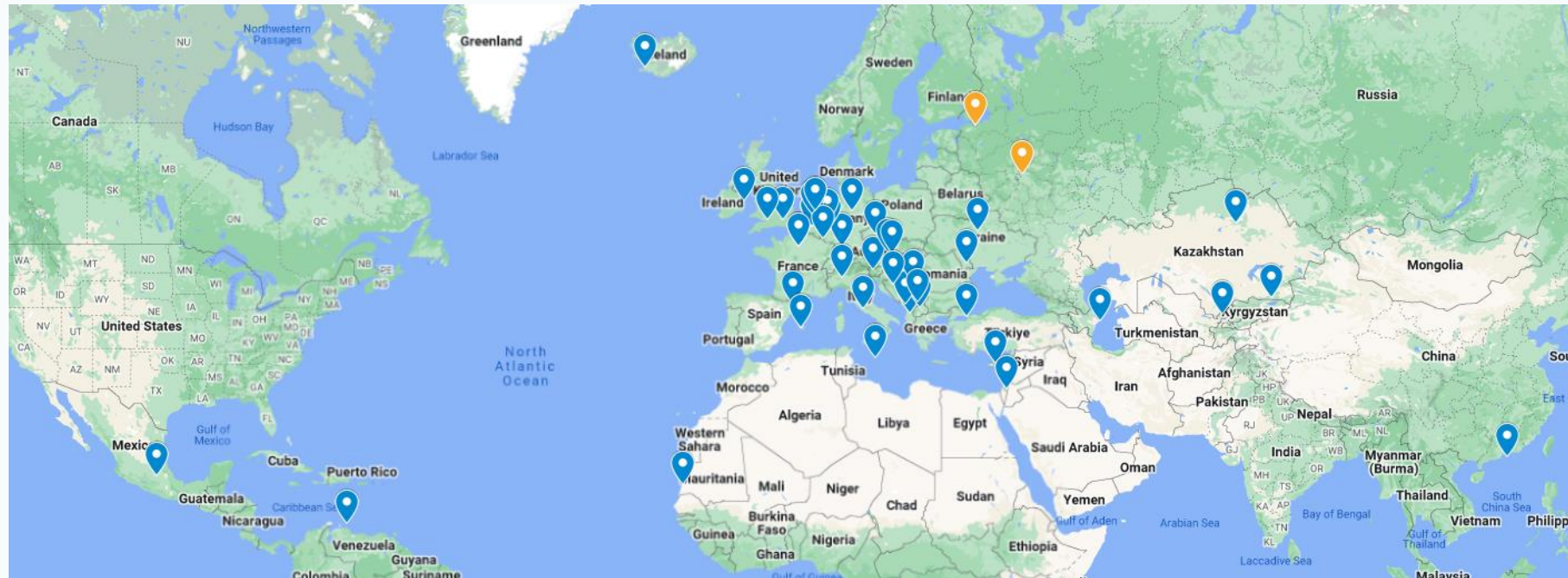


# MEMBER AGENCIES (56 IN 31 COUNTRIES)



- ➔ Membership is open to **quality assurance bodies** in the field of higher education
- that are conducting quality assurance activities as understood in the **ESG**,
  - are located in an **EHEA member state**, and
  - act in compliance with the **membership criteria**.

# AFFILIATES (49 IN 29 COUNTRIES)



- Affiliation is open to bodies that do not wish to, or are unable to, apply to become members, bona fide **quality assurance agencies or other organisations** (excluding higher education institutions) with a demonstrable **involvement in the quality assurance** of higher education.
- Affiliates **have access to ENQA’s activities and services** but can’t participate in ENQA’s governance mechanisms.

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## MISSION

- As the designated stakeholder organisation of quality assurance agencies in the EHEA, ENQA:
  - **represents** their interests internationally
  - **supports** them nationally and
  - **provides** them with comprehensive services and networking opportunities. *ENQA is a key source of reliable information, expertise and know-how on QA.*
- Under ENQA's umbrella, the community of agencies **drive innovation** in quality assurance and refines quality assurance processes. *ENQA monitors changes in the higher education landscape and is a guarantor of knowledge-based development of external quality assurance.*

## VISION

- An EHEA where persistently **high-quality education** contributes to responsible and active **European citizens** in democratic and sustainable societies, where **access** is attainable for all, and where graduates acquire a broad **knowledge** base on which to build regionally and globally rewarding **careers** while inspiring their **personal development**.

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# ACTIVITIES

- **Dissemination of information** on experiences, good practice and new developments in the field of QA to members and other stakeholders
- **Leadership development** program
- Organisation of **events**, including co-organization of **EQAF**
- **European and international projects**
- Participation in **policy making**
- Member of the **European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) Board**
- Coordination of **thematic working groups** to support QA development
- Publication of **reports** and **policy papers**
- Developing and strengthening **partnership with stakeholder organisations** in higher education in Europe and worldwide
- Coordination of **external reviews** of QA agencies



# ACTIVITIES

- **Dissemination of information** on experiences, good practice and new developments in the field of QA to members and other stakeholders
  - aiming to keep members and affiliates updated and raise awareness and public trust regarding the role of quality assurance;
  - mainly through participation in different events, newsletters, social media and the website, where updated information on ENQA's activities and projects and many relevant resources in the field of QA are available.
- **Leadership development program**
  - intensive European peer-learning experience for high-potential professional staff in member and affiliate quality assurance agencies.
- ENQA is organising different **events** for the members - Members' Forum, seminars and webinars on QA, and participates in organising the European Quality Assurance Forum (**EQAF**), the most important QA conference in the EHEA. The next edition will take place in Portugal in November, and the call for contributions is open by **2 October 2023**.

# ACTIVITIES

- ENQA is also coordinating or being a partner in different **projects**, and this activity is essential for developing various tools, studies or policies in the quality assurance field and supporting the quality assurance agencies in achieving their goals or collaborating on themes of common interest.
  - on the future of European QA ([QA-FIT](#));
  - support of Bologna TPG C on QA ([IMINQA](#));
  - support for ESG alignment ([SEQA-ESG II](#)).
- Participation in **policy making**
  - Consultative member in the **Bologna Follow-up Group** since 2005 and member to different working structures (*fundamental values, T&L, global dialogue, TPG C*)
  - Co-operation within **E4** (EUA, ESU, EURASHE)
  - Dialogue with the **European Commission**

# ACTIVITIES

- Within working groups are being developed policies on areas of interest for the members
  - the current ones are working on QA of **micro-credentials** and the role of QA in **academic integrity**
  - a new one was just established in the field of QA of **research**
  - Past themes: e-learning, recognition, excellence, lifelong learning, impact of QA.
- Publication of **reports** and **policy papers** (*quality procedures, accreditation models, terminology of quality assurance, stakeholders involvement, qualification frameworks, IQA, learning outcomes, diploma supplement, transnational HE, cross-border QA, trends in QA, joint programmes, etc.*)

## ACTIVITIES

- ENQA also maintains **links with other quality assurance networks** to enhance cooperation with other regions of the world and to ensure that ENQA's members benefit from exchange of practice.
  - [African Quality Assurance Network](#) (AfriQAN)
  - [ASEAN Quality Assurance Network](#) (AQAN)
  - [Asia-Pacific Quality Network](#) (APQN)
  - [Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education](#) (ANQAHE)
  - [Council of Regional Accrediting Commission](#) (C-RAC, USA)
  - [International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education](#) (INQAAHE)
  - [Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education](#) (CEENQA)
  - [Council for Higher Education Accreditation International Quality Group](#) (CIQG, USA)
  - [Sistema Iberoamericano de Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Superior](#) (SIACES)

# ACTIVITIES

## AGENCY REVIEWS - PURPOSE

### ENQA membership

- An external review against the ESG is a **prerequisite to become a member** of ENQA / for renewal of membership (every 5 years).
- To be eligible, the agency should have been operational in quality assurance for at least **2 years** and should have completed at least 5 review reports.

### EQAR registration

- An external review against the ESG is also a requirement for agencies wishing to apply to the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)
- ENQA Agency Reviews also comply with **EQAR's requirements for external reviews.**

# ACTIVITIES

## AGENCY REVIEWS - PURPOSE

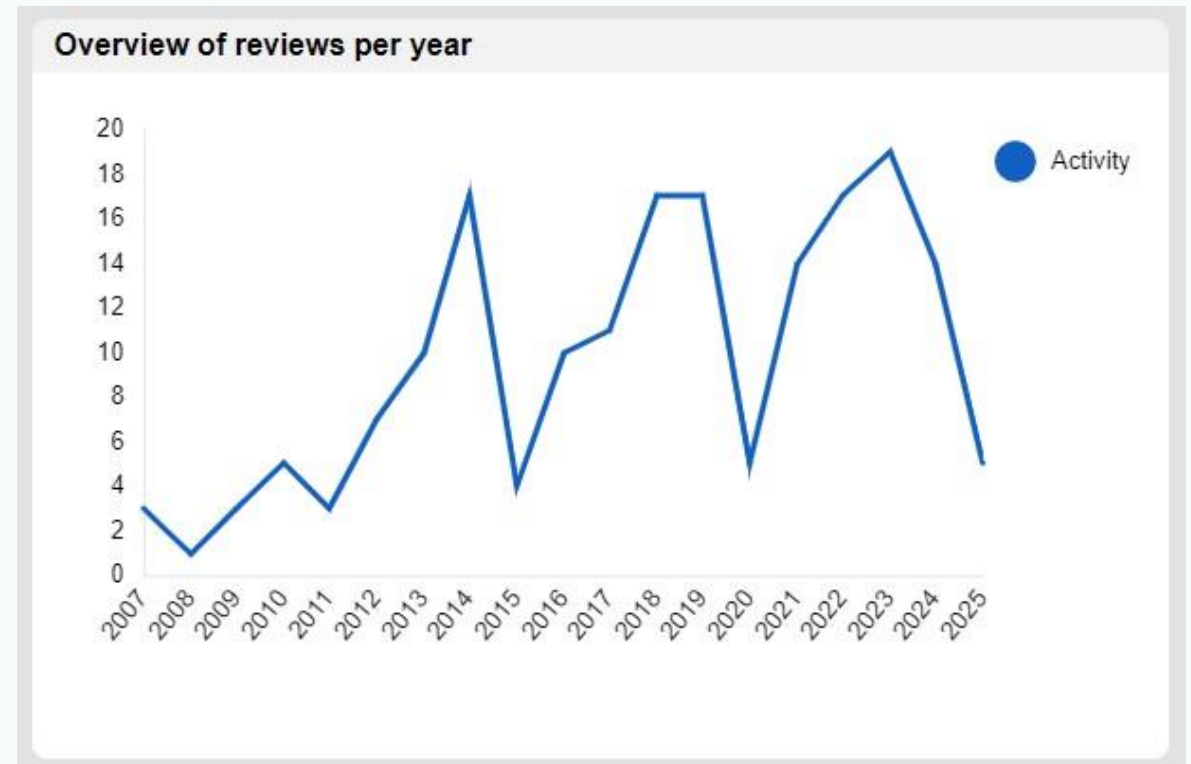
- All reviews – whether first, second, or subsequent or full/targeted – must always have a **developmental approach** and aim at **constant enhancement** of the agencies so that they could perform **fit-for-purpose external quality assurance activities**.



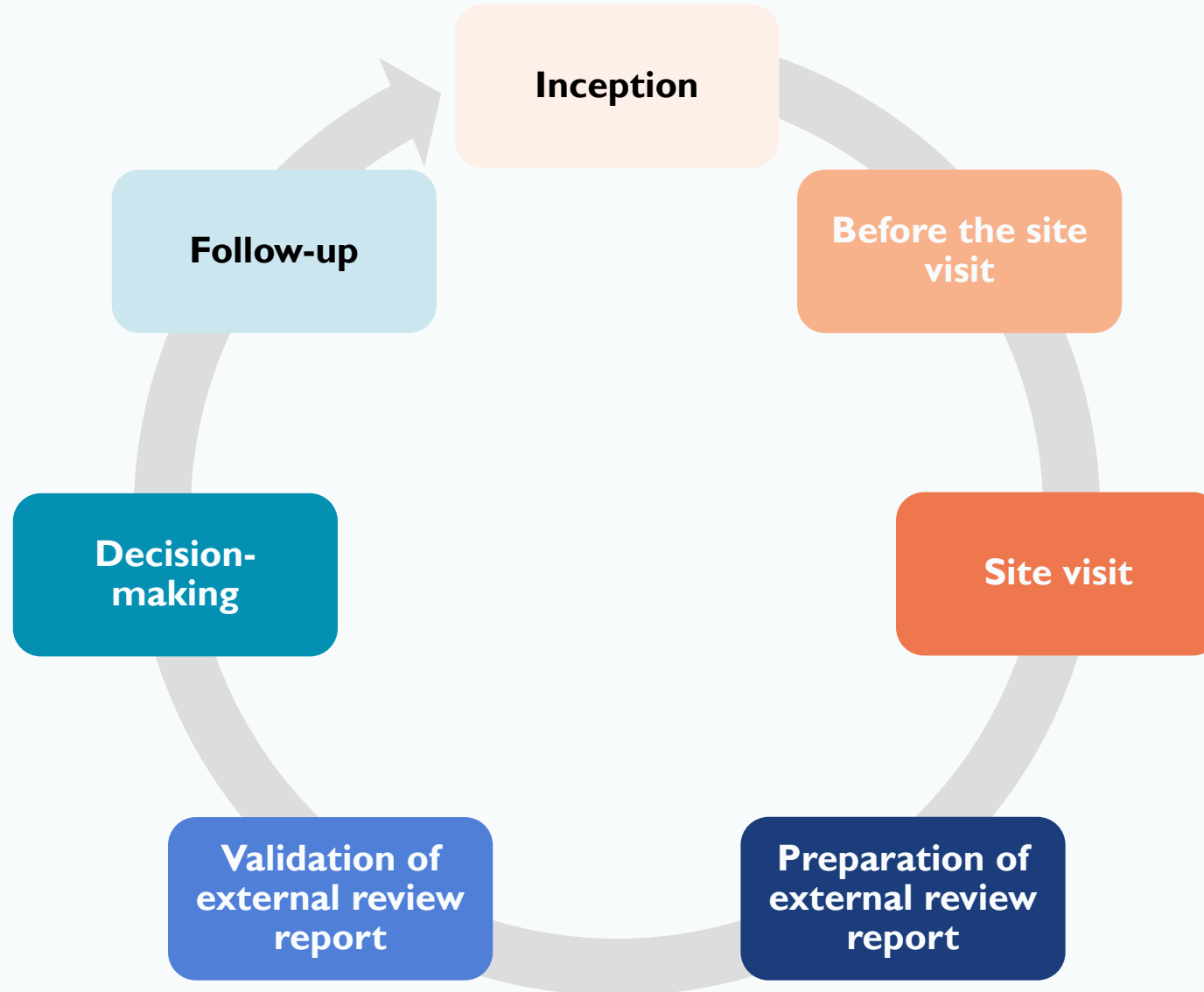
# ACTIVITIES

## AGENCY REVIEWS

- externally reviewed in 2019 for compliance with the ESGs
- regular training seminars for experts and experienced reviewers
- seminars for agencies that will / went through a review
- regular thematic analysis



# MAIN STAGES OF THE REVIEW PROCESS





Check our infographic here:



## Analysis of Agency Reviews 2022

### What did we do in 2022?









### Did you know?

In 2022, ENQA introduced the so-called **targeted reviews** for agencies that have been through at least two full reviews

This type of review focuses on the remaining challenges in reaching ESG compliance, while at the same time further strengthening the enhancement part of the review

The targeted reviews are designed to result in the same type of decision on renewal of membership in ENQA or registration in EQAR as a full review

#### Goals of targeted reviews

-  Provide a shorter review
-  Evaluate remaining challenges
-  Be more resource mindful
-  Assess new or changed activities
-  Ensure a stronger enhancement aspect
-  Evaluate any substantial changes

### What do they say about ENQA Agency Reviews?

#### Agencies

- 100%** Say that communication with ENQA coordinator was useful in preparing for the review
- The panel had good knowledge of the ESG and international QA **100%**
- 91%** Say the review timeline was appropriate for the process
- The review report is very useful for the agency and its stakeholders **73%**

*"The process was very well organised, and the report provided important recommendations for the development and further improvement of the agency's activities." – IQAA*

#### Experts

- 92%** Say that ENQA coordinated the review in an effective way
- Consider that the online briefing provided by ENQA was useful **96%**
- 100%** The structure and duration of the review was convenient
- The review report template was clear and helpful in writing the ERR **100%**

*"ENQA is doing a great job in making the reviews meaningful and the consistency of reviews has improved significantly over the last years." – Expert*

Source: 12 Agencies reviewed in 2021 & 2022 and 25 reviewers who participated in ENQA-coordinated reviews in 2021 & 2022

### What do they say about ENQA Progress Visits?



#### Agencies

**100%** Were satisfied with the experts' level of contribution to the discussion on the selected topics

*"It was very helpful to have some open discussions with colleagues coming from outside the agency and country, in a "safe space" without any evaluation or judgement."*

*QOI representative*



#### Experts

**100%** Had a good understanding of what was expected from them thanks to the ENQA guidelines and the preparatory meeting

*"It was a truly good experience. I felt there was open discussion on plans, potentials, risks. That was a critical friend visit with the intention to support and not to assess. I really liked it."*

*Expert*


Source: 4 agencies that have received a progress visit in 2022 and 6 experts that have participated in it

### Did you know?

ENQA yearly organises training for new agency reviewers

This training provides future reviewers with the necessary knowledge and guidance on the ESG, the ENQA Agency review process, compliance assessment and expectations of the ENQA Agency Review Committee (ARC)

Training is mandatory for all potential reviewers regardless of the nominating organisation

 What do they say about our training?

**95%** Satisfied with the organisation and quality of the training

**100%** Considered that had achieved sufficient knowledge of the ESG

Source: 20 participants who took part in the training in 2022

### Our way forward

The 2022 ENQA analysis of Agency Reviews has revealed seven key areas of action for the following year:

1. Monitoring of the possibility to implement hybrid site visits to avoid any negative impacts on the review process
2. Continuation of the rigorous, systematic, and transparent work of the ENQA Agency Review Committee (ARC)
3. Further thematic analyses to support the ARC in their work, particularly in relation to ESG 2.3 and ESG 2.6
4. Evaluation of the methodology of the targeted reviews focusing on the goals, methods, resources and value for agencies under review
5. Review of the ENQA template for the external review to ensure it includes all the necessary evidence for evaluation of the agency's compliance against the ESG
6. Revision of ENQA's Book of Precedents to strengthen the consistency of ENQA Agency Reviews
7. Further reflection on the purpose of agency reviews in the EHEA and the use of the ESG for this



# QUALITY CULTURE



- Quality assurance and quality enhancement are thus inter-related. They can support the development of a **quality culture** that is **embraced by all**: from the students and academic staff to the institutional leadership and management.
- The ESG are based on the following four **principles** for quality assurance in the EHEA:
  - ✓ **Higher education institutions have primary responsibility** for the quality of their provision and its assurance;
  - ✓ Quality assurance **responds to the diversity of higher education** systems, institutions, programmes and students;
  - ✓ Quality assurance supports the development of a **quality culture**;
  - ✓ Quality assurance takes into account the **needs and expectations** of students, all other stakeholders and society.

# QUALITY CULTURE



## I.1 Policy for quality assurance

### Standard:

Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.

### Guidelines:

Policies and processes are the main pillars of a coherent institutional quality assurance system that forms a cycle for continuous improvement and contributes to the accountability of the institution. **It supports the development of *quality culture* in which all internal stakeholders assume responsibility for quality and engage in quality assurance at all levels of the institution.** In order to facilitate this, the policy has a formal status and is publicly available.

THANK  
YOU

[secretariat@enqa.eu](mailto:secretariat@enqa.eu)  
<https://www.enqa.eu/>

enqa.