



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova – Republic of Kosovo
Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim
Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju
Kosovo Accreditation Agency



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Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA)

Host: Kosovo Accreditation Agency

Venue: Emerald Hotel

Date: 26th of September 2023

Conference on Higher Education

Topic: The impact of QA Mechanisms on establishing a quality culture

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Speech of the Prime Minister of Republic of Kosovo, Mr. Albin Kurti

Honorable Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Mrs. Arbërie Nagavci,

Honorable Chairperson of the State Quality Council, Mrs. Hasnije Ilazi,

The Honorable Director of the Kosovo Agency for Accreditation, Mr. Naim Gashi,

Honorable President of the European Register for Quality Assurance in Higher Education EQAR, Mr. Stéphane Lauwick,

Honorable Vice President of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), Mrs. Cristina Ghitulica,

Dear Members of the Parliamentary Committee for Education,

Dear Ambassador of the Republic of Austria in Kosovo,

Representatives of the Embassy of Croatia,

Dear rectors and vice-rectors of our universities,

Dear participants,

I am glad to address you at the opening of this international conference on quality in higher education, organized by the Kosovo Agency for Accreditation. And this a few days before the start of the new academic year.

Kosovo, our country, presents a very special case of how a university practically produced the state itself. I am talking about the University of Pristina, which since its establishment in 1970, has produced all the cultural, professional and political elites, who have tended to social emancipatory processes and the effort of the people of Kosovo for liberation and for the creation of the Republic of Kosovo. This best shows how important higher education is for our country, specifically the level of quality in universities and colleges.

The quality of higher education in Kosovo is high among the priorities of our Government. The Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation is particularly concerned about the modernization of higher education and the establishment of adequate criteria for raising and maintaining the quality of

higher education. In these policies of our Government, the relations of the relevant institutions of higher education with European and international agencies and mechanisms for the quality of higher education and the internationalization of higher education in general are very important.

I regret that in recent years, these reports have not always been at the desirable level. That is why we are still here today, to strengthen old bridges and build new bridges, between the Kosovo Accreditation Agency on the one hand and the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the European Registry for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (EQAR) on the other hand, as well as Higher Education Institutions and our international partners. The Kosovo Agency for Accreditation has all its institutional independence and the capacity to convey the will and energy of completing the international cooperation network for cultivating the quality of higher education in our Republic.

But we, as the Government of Kosovo, are continuously engaged as we have finalized the Draft Law on Higher Education, which was also voted in the government meeting and is now in the Assembly of the Republic. Just as the Law on the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) with the acronym that I will mention below has been finalized and voted in the Assembly, this Law guarantees the institutional and financial independence of the KAA, takes into consideration the recommendations of the European Association for the Assurance of Quality in Higher Education (ENQA) and guarantees the harmonization of our education system with the European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance (ESG). The law prevents any interference in the independence of AKA, brings innovation in relation to the countries of the region, and creates a strong basis for its return to ENQA and EQAR.

We have secured the facility for the agency, we have approved the vacancies in the AKA, for the completion of the staff and we have budgeted them. We have provided full support for internal regulation and quality standards, such as the Strategic Plan of KAA 2021-2025, the new accreditation standards for the bachelor and master level, the promotion of regional as well as international cooperation. We have encouraged KAA to promote cooperation with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and for complete transparency, decisions and actions that create the prerequisites for KAA's membership in ENKA and EQAR.

The Minister of Education has signed the decision on the compatibility of scientific works and publications with ethics, in the research of the academic staff of higher education institutions (HEIs). With this decision, they are obliged to upload the doctoral dissertation and publications in indexed journals, on the platforms defined by the AKA handbook for accreditation, when declaring the academic staff on the AKA e-accreditation platform and we are committed to equipping all universities with plagiarism control systems. We are determined to ensure academic and ethical integrity and the strict implementation of European quality standards which decisively state that: "institutions (of higher education) have policies and processes that guarantee and improve the quality of their activities, such as research and governance".

In the wake of all this legal infrastructure and financial investments, I hope that the institutions responsible for quality in higher education in Kosovo will find their place in international institutions for quality in higher education. Wishing you good work and efficient cooperation to this conference, and our government's commitment to support, I greet you and thank you.