

# EURASHE REPORT

ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  
THE EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES  
FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER  
EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS



European Association of Institutions in Higher Education





EURASHE Report

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABBREVIATIONS</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>FOREWORD</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>EURASHE ENGAGEMENT IN QUALITY ASSURANCE</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE EURASHE CONSULTATION</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Methodology.....	9
On-line survey.....	9
Workshop at a members’ event.....	9
Structured interview.....	10
<b>I. AWARENESS/KNOWLEDGE OF THE ESG</b> .....	<b>11</b>
I.1 Knowing the ESG.....	11
I.2 How did you become acquainted with the ESG?.....	11
I.3 Being aware of the different chapters?.....	13
<b>II. AIMS OF THE ESG</b> .....	<b>14</b>
II.1 Have the objectives been achieved?.....	14
II.2 Have the stated purposes of ESG been realised?.....	17
<b>III. IMPLEMENTATION</b> .....	<b>19</b>
III.1 Usefulness of the ESG?.....	19
III.2 Usefulness of the ESG for the institution?.....	21
III.3 Usefulness of the ESG for QAAs v. Institutions?.....	23
III.4 Usefulness of the ESG to the different actors in the institution?.....	25
III.5 Satisfaction with the implementation of the ESG by the QAAs?.....	26
III.6 Elements connected to the IQA of the institution?.....	28
III.7 Internal QA redesigned?.....	30
III.8 Internal QA checked with ESG?.....	33
III.9 National QA provisions or regulations connected to the ESG?.....	35
<b>IV. APPROPRIATENESS</b> .....	<b>39</b>
IV.1 Degree of support of the ESG for QA?.....	39
IV.2 Rating the ESG on a set of objective criteria?.....	41
<b>V. REVIEW SECTION</b> .....	<b>42</b>
V.1 Should the ESG be revised?.....	42
V.2 How should the ESG be revised?.....	43
<b>VI. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EURASHE</b> .....	<b>48</b>
<b>POSTSCRIPT</b> .....	<b>51</b>
<b>ANNEXES</b> .....	<b>52</b>
1. Full on-line questionnaire.....	52
2. List of participating countries.....	56
3. MAP-ESG interview document.....	57

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>E4-Group</b>	Partnership between ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE, mainly related to quality assurance
<b>EHEA</b>	European Higher Education Area
<b>ENQA</b>	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
<b>EQA</b>	External quality assurance
<b>EQAF</b>	European Quality Assurance Forum
<b>EQAR</b>	European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education
<b>ESG</b>	European Standards and Guidelines – <i>Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area</i>
<b>ESU</b>	European Students’ Union
<b>EUA</b>	European University Association
<b>EURASHE</b>	European Association of Institutions in Higher Education
<b>HEI</b>	Higher education institution
<b>IQA</b>	Internal quality assurance
<b>MAP-ESG</b>	Mapping the Implementation and Application of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
<b>QA</b>	Quality assurance
<b>QAA</b>	Quality assurance agency

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EURASHE would like to thank the following persons for their invaluable help and support in preparing this report: including **Lucien Bollaert**, Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation (NVAO, NL/BE-FL), International expert in internal and external quality assurance and advisor to EURASHE in quality assurance issues, Chief Editor of this Report; **Andreas G. Orphanides**, European University Cyprus (EUC) Rector, EURASHE President; **Guy Aelterman**, expert in internal and external quality assurance and advisor to EURASHE in quality assurance issues; **Caty Duykaerts** and **Elfriede Heinen**; Agence pour l'Evaluation de la Qualité de l'Enseignement Supérieur (AEQES, BE-WB), Director Executive Council and Member Management Board respectively; **Barbara Michalk**, German Rector's Conference (HRK), Head of Section, Higher Education Reform in Germany and Europe; **Bryan Maguire**, Qualifications and Quality Assurance Authority of Ireland, Head of Qualifications Services Designate; **Dries Froyen**, Flemish Council of University Colleges (VLHORA), Quality Assurance Department.

We would like to mention specifically the **numerous respondents** to our consultation, many of whom are cited in this publication, and we also thank the **EURASHE Secretariat**, Iva Voldánová and Alexandre Wipf, for continuous support, and finally **Terence Clifford-Amos**, European Higher Education Consultant who kindly offered to review the present report.



## FOREWORD

In 2010, five years after the adoption of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA (ESG) by the European Ministers of Education in Bergen (2005), in cooperation with the other partners of the E4-Group, ENQA, ESU and EUA, EURASHE accepted the mandate from the Ministers of the European Higher Education Area to examine the awareness, implementation and usefulness of the ESG in view of a possible revision of the ESG.

The E4-Group responded by running a project, “Mapping the Implementation and Application of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (MAP-ESG project)”, and presented a joint report of the MAP-ESG project at the Ministerial meeting in Bucharest in April 2012.

As we had completed an extensive consultation amongst members and stakeholders for the MAP-ESG project, which had delivered substantial input and which had only partly fed into the joint E4 report, EURASHE proposed to publish a report of its own, focusing on the results and recommendations affecting professional higher education.

It allows us to formulate conclusions that are less shaped by a compromise between the E4 partners, and to reflect a stronger opinion from experts and stakeholders in professional higher education. To mention one: the EURASHE survey results reveal significant regional differences in the implementation and usefulness of the ESG for professional higher-education institutions, depending amongst others, on the experience with formal internal and external quality assurance. I am therefore pleased to present to you a summative report in which the results from an extensive on-line survey are interpreted with the help of information gathered at a workshop and in a number of in-depth interviews. This EURASHE report is the result of two years’ work and commitment by a large number of people. Therefore, I wish to thank all contributors to this initiative: the members of EURASHE’s working group on quality assurance and transparency instruments, the EURASHE Secretariat and the participants to the on-line survey, the workshop and in-depth-interviews.

This report reveals more than just ‘how’ the ESG are perceived and implemented: it shows the surprisingly strong influence of the ESG in the development of quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area, and further provides an insight into the diverse and common-ground practices of quality assurance in professional higher education in different countries in the European Higher Education Area. Such insight, hopefully will facilitate broad communication and co-operation in quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area. This brief report is therefore further evidence of EURASHE’s commitment to continuous support towards the development of quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

Stefan Delplace

Secretary General of EURASHE



## EURASHE ENGAGEMENT IN QUALITY ASSURANCE

EURASHE, the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education with affiliations of over 1,200 institutions with professionally-oriented programmes in 33 countries (through National Associations of University Colleges/Universities of Applied Sciences/Polytechnics, individual higher education institutions and with connections with professional associations and stakeholder organisations) has cooperated on quality and quality assurance with other major stakeholders in higher education – the E4-Group – since 2003. As the representative of professional higher education, we have shared in the several Ministerial mandates given to the E4-Group, – namely to create the *European Standards and Guidelines*, to set up a register for quality assurance agencies (EQAR), to work out and establish the practicalities for the Register’s operations and finally to examine the revision of the ESG for quality assurance.

EURASHE has also been further involved in quality assurance matters through related projects and initiatives in partner countries of the European Union, e.g.: the EXEQUANT and CANQA projects in Central Asia; the monitoring of the implementation of quality assurance on an institutional level (in member institutions of EURASHE); through the participation of our individual experts in external review panels; our contributions to quality assurance publications; and together with our E4 partners, the co-organisation of the annual European Quality Assurance Forum since 2006.

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE EURASHE CONSULTATION

Since the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) were adopted by the ministers in 2005, the higher-education framework in Europe – and in association with it – quality assurance (QA) within that framework has undergone major changes. As a result, the suggestion of revising the ESG began to surface, bearing in mind the recommendations made by the authors of this report, that an analysis of implementation and impact would, preferably, be a longer-term measure.

Hence, with the backing of the European Commission, the E4-Group (ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE) launched the MAP-ESG project to collect and collate information on the implementation and application of the ESG in the 47 Bologna signatory states. It was agreed that each member of the E4-Group would consult with their own member institutions and submit the results for the compilation of one joint report to the ministers. This report was presented at the Ministerial meeting in Bucharest in April 2012. The individual and more detailed reports of the E4 members were to be published individually, one of them being the EURASHE Report on the impact of the ESG in institutions and programmes concerned with professional orientation.

EURASHE engaged in consultation on the impact and implementation of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in institutions and programmes whose profiles were of professional orientation. Research instruments included: an on-line questionnaire; telephone and face-to-face interviews and organised workshops, in which involved participants included EURASHE members and all who had an affinity with the professional sector.

We purposefully opted for different consultation methods, so as to guarantee an input from various sources (institutions, QA experts and stakeholders). Additionally, there was an understanding that the consultation would relate to the three distinct parts of the ESG and therefore would attract different categories of respondents (rectors, QA experts, students, alumni and, where applicable, employers).

The consultation involved countries which had different QA systems and varying experience and expertise in QA, gained via earlier, or through more recent involvement in the higher education reform process.

The different approaches, using varying sources of consultation, yielded well-documented and significantly diverse findings, from which (within the given time restraints) we have attempted to provide a comprehensive picture of the ESG implementation in relation to the professional sector of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) covered by EURASHE.

The present report is the final version of the EURASHE report on the implementation of the ESG in institutions of professional higher education, together with the concomitant instruments, i.e., the results of the full on-line questionnaire, interviews and EURASHE's policy statement on Quality Assurance.

The structure of this summative report follows the agreed structure of the intended E4 report, with the major findings derived from the consultation and a set of conclusions and recommendations

based on these. In the findings, we have indicated the source of the information – i.e., the different consultation methods, on-line survey, workshop sessions, and in-depth interviews.

The subtitles used in this report are taken from the questions and statements from the on-line questionnaire, which is the basis of the EURASHE report on the implementation of the ESG.

## Methodology

As mentioned in the introduction, data was collected in three ways: first an on-line survey was conducted with the aim to reach a representative number of stakeholders from all over Europe; second, a more in-depth consultation was conducted during a workshop at a members' event and the third involved structured interviews.

### On-line survey

Within the EURASHE working group on QA, a questionnaire (see annex 1) was developed. EURASHE agreed with the other E4 partners on a number of common questions to be used in the consultations of each of the E4 partners. The questionnaire covered topics such as familiarity with the ESG; the usefulness of the ESG and whether the ESG should be revised and how they might be revised. An open question was added to give respondents the possibility to add comments. The working group on QA opted for a concise questionnaire instrument containing 27 questions.

In the first phase, heads of institutions were asked to identify other respondents in their own environment, such as a QA coordinator, a student and an 'external' stakeholder (not directly linked to their institution), such as employers, alumni, student counsellors, etc.. It was, however, not possible to maintain such consistency in the later phases of the on-line consultation, which therefore limited the full institutional approach to a few countries. However, the picture resulting from these cases maintains the importance of a holistic approach to QA at institutional level.

The deadline for participating in the on-line consultation on our website, which was open to everyone who was interested, was extended several times, and when concluded, contained 230 fully completed, legitimate responses from 25 countries in the EHEA and 12 countries outside the EHEA (see annex 2).

### Workshop at a members' event

The consultation, in the form of workshops at a members' event (EURASHE's 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference, 1 April 2011, Nice, France) was targeted at the standard attendees at our members' events, comprising heads of institutions, programme and internationalisation directors. The attendance proved, however, to be much more diverse, and because of this, the focus was nearly always on 'knowledge' and 'awareness' of the ESG, rather than on the degree of implementation. The participants were split into two groups: a French-speaking cohort and an English-speaking cohort.

### Structured interview

In order to collect more in-depth insights from the answers on the on-line questionnaire, the working group on QA conducted structured telephone and face-to-face interviews. The target group was a sample of those who had responded on the on-line questionnaires. This selection of identified 'interested persons' in a number of countries was given targeted and 'open' questions, which were geared more towards the implementation and the 'review' perspective of the ESG. A set of detailed questions (see annex 3) was then sent to the targeted persons – who had expressed their interest in such an in-depth questioning – proposing a prior written input from their part, and inviting them for a telephone/face-to-face interview of 30-60 minutes. Thirty questions covered the following topics: knowledge of the ESG, internal implementation of the ESG, External quality assurance (EQA) and revision of the ESG.

For this part of the consultation, an attempt was made to cover different geographical and cultural areas in the EHEA, based on our presumptions – from the on-line consultation – that the geographical and cultural spread was an important element in assessing the degree of both knowledge and implementation of the ESG.

The countries involved in this exercise were *Belgium (n=3)*, *Finland (n=1)*, *France (n=2)*, *Ireland (n=3)*, *Kazakhstan (n=4)*, *Lithuania (n=3)*, and *Portugal (n=2)*, thus covering countries with different QA systems, varying experience with and know-how of QA, ranging from the earliest till the most recent involvement in the 'Bologna' higher-education reform process.

Results of the in-depth interviews were used to assist with the interpretation of the on-line survey. The quantitative results are accompanied with some quotations from the respondents which assist in contextualising the figures.



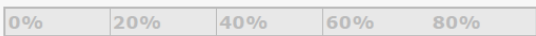
## I. AWARENESS/KNOWLEDGE OF THE ESG

Quite appropriately, the first question centred on ‘awareness’ of the ESG. The remainder of the questions focused on post-awareness and familiarity. From the in-depth interview, we learned how respondents became more acquainted with the ESG.

### I.1 Knowing the ESG

#### 7. Do you know European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG)?

(Each respondent could choose only **ONE** of the following responses.)

Response	Total	% of responses	%
1 YES	153		67%
2 NO	77		33%
<b>Total respondents: 230</b> <b>Skipped question: 0</b>			

More than two thirds of the respondents of the EURASHE survey claimed to know the ESG. This is unsurprising, considering the profile of the respondents in the three consulted target groups (mainly rectors and QA experts).

From the Nice workshop, we learned that amongst the French-speaking participants, the ESG were barely known. Realistically – if not inevitably – during the workshop, participants were reluctant to hear about or consider a possible new "layer of control" and European bureaucracy. This might be explained by the fact that France has a high-level of state control. This explanation could be supported by the reaction of the English-speaking participants who were generally less sceptical about the ESG, even those who were new to the text and its subject.

### I.2 How did you become acquainted with the ESG?

Most consulted persons came in contact with the ESG through the Quality assurance agencies (QAAs) (essentially in Western and Northern Europe). The QAAs introduced the ESG to the institutions through EQA. The ESG standards indicate points of interest and are linked to the criteria used by EQA. Some respondents mentioned that they came in contact with the ESG as a panel member in EQA activities and procedures.

*FinHEEC (Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council) is the Finnish agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions. It is FinHEEC that has provided the HE institutions with all information.*

***Aimo Virtanen, Quality Manager, University of Helsinki, Finland [FI01]***

Others were aware of the ESG because they had been following the Bologna process since 1999, and as a consequence, knew the outcomes of the Bologna Ministerial meeting in Bergen in 2005.

The yearly European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF) provided information on the ESG, too, as the references indicate. Many participants and respondents made the initial contact with the ESG during EQAF workshops.

*[...] c'est lors de ma première participation à l'EQAF en 2008 à Budapest que j'ai pris la mesure de l'action de l'ENQA et du rôle des ESG.<sup>1</sup>*

***Chargée de mission Evaluation et appui au pilotage des formations, Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour (UPPA), France [FR02]***

A final group of respondents, mostly coming from Eastern Europe, said they came in contact with the ESG through international projects (Tempus projects on QA or on the implementation of the Bologna Declaration priorities) or via networks of institutions and umbrella organisations.

*We have become acquainted with the ESG through the external quality assurance system in Europe. Our University joined the Magna Charta Universitatum in Italy, Bologna in 2005, became a member of the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE) and accepted all the principles and regulations of the Bologna Declaration. Since that time the quality assurance is one of the priorities of the university strategic development. Much is being done today on updating and improving the education process for undergraduate and postgraduate students. The adopted University Quality Management System was certified in September 2004 and re-tested in February 2008, April 2011 by certification body of quality management system "Techcentre-Register" ROSS RU.*

***Elena Milova, Head of the Department for Quality Management, Korkyt Ata Kyzylorda State University (KKSU), Kazakhstan [KZ03]***

It was gratifying to learn that most Northern and Western European institutions (including the Spanish ones) had known the ESG since 2005 and that they had since then included the standards in their External and Internal QA procedures.

Institutions in countries which joined the EHEA at a later date, consequently implemented the Bologna Declaration priorities and the ESG at a later stage. It was not exceptional – given the varying dates of QA implementation across nations – to learn that some institutions or countries introduced the ESG in QA only very recently.

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<sup>1</sup> It is during my first participation in the 2008 EQAF in Budapest that I realised the extent of ENQA's action and the role of the ESG. (translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE)

*Implementation of Bologna process started in Lithuania together with implementation the main principles of QA system. [...] I was acquainted with ESG when our QA guide was renewed. We found that our QA system is created according to European standards and guidelines.*

**Nijole Galdikiene, Deputy Director for Strategic Development, Klaipeda State College, Lithuania [LT01]**

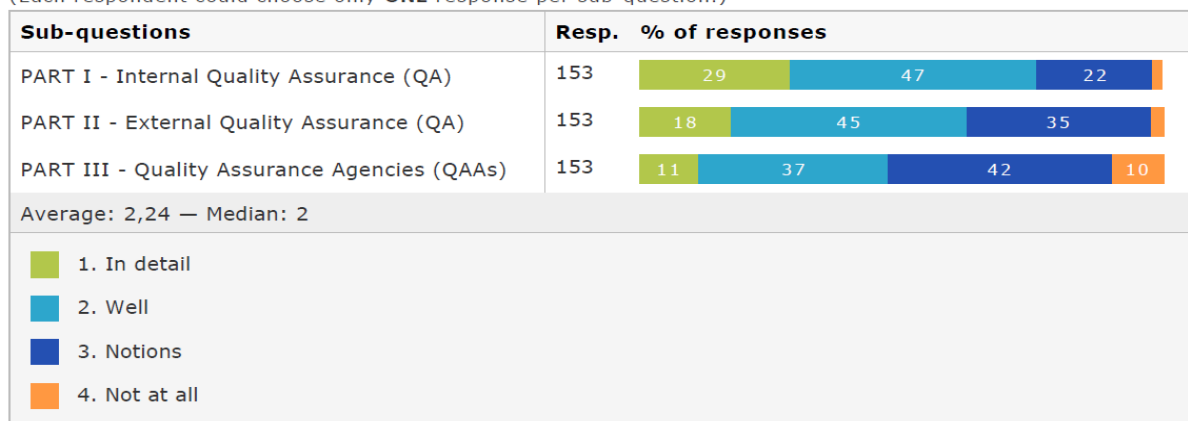
*The internal QA system at the HEI was developed late, from 2009 to 2010 and only at the end the ESG chapter 1 were brought in as inspiration and last check.*

**David Almeida, Student, Estoril Higher Institute for Tourism and Hotel Studies, Portugal [PT01]**

### I.3 Being aware of the different chapters?

#### 8. If so, tell us to what extent are you familiar with the different chapters.

(Each respondent could choose only **ONE** response per sub-question.)



Generally, 76% of the respondents were familiar (or knew very well) part 1 of the ESG. Two thirds also stated that they knew part 2 fairly well. However, more than 50 % did not know part 3 at all, or, at least, very little of this section.

*J'assure au sein de mon établissement et pour les universités de Lorraine une fonction de conseil et d'accompagnement dans la mise en place des dispositifs de management de la qualité (au sein des composantes). J'utilise donc la partie 1 des ESG à cet effet. Les ESG sont : « le référentiel » dans lequel s'inscrivent tous les travaux mis en place dans le domaine de la formation (écoles d'ingénieurs, instituts de formation).<sup>2</sup>*

**Sabine Goulin, Directrice de la Délégation à l'Aide au Pilotage et à la Qualité (DAPEQ), Université de Lorraine, France [FR01]**

<sup>2</sup> I am in charge of advising on and supporting the implementation of quality management systems (in each department) in my home institution and for universities in the Lorraine region. To this end I employ Part 1 of the ESG. The ESG are 'the referential' in which all activities of the training area are situated (engineering schools, training institutes). (translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE)



## II. AIMS OF THE ESG

In analysing the aims of the ESG, two sets of questions and answers followed. One set concerned the objectives of the ESG and the other set concerned the purpose of the ESG.




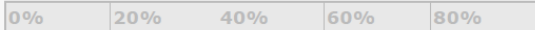
### II.1 Have the objectives been achieved?

*Please note: whilst the number of respondents who declared knowing the ESG is lower than the number of respondents for the following question, provided the objectives are mentioned in the question, the authors believed that irrespective of the respondent's knowledge of the ESG objectives being linked to the ESG as such, the former might have been achieved nevertheless.*

#### 11.1. Do you think the objectives of ESG have been achieved?

- to encourage the development of higher education institutions which foster vibrant intellectual and educational achievement




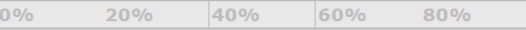
(Each respondent could choose **MULTIPLE** responses.)

Response	Total	% of responses	%
1 YES	71		31%
2 PARTLY	147		64%
3 NO	17		7%
<b>Total respondents: 230</b> <b>Skipped question: 0</b>			

#### 11.2. Do you think the objectives of ESG have been achieved?

- to provide a source of assistance and guidance to higher education institutions and other relevant agencies in developing their own culture of quality assurance




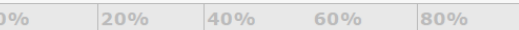
(Each respondent could choose **MULTIPLE** responses.)

Response	Total	% of responses	%
1 YES	101		44%
2 PARTLY	113		49%
3 NO	16		7%
<b>Total respondents: 230</b> <b>Skipped question: 0</b>			

#### 11.3. Do you think the objectives of ESG have been achieved?

- to provide a source of assistance and guidance to QA agencies in developing their own culture of quality assurance




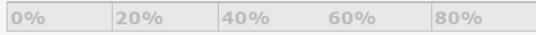
(Each respondent could choose **MULTIPLE** responses.)

Response	Total	% of responses	%
1 YES	102		44%
2 PARTLY	104		45%
3 NO	26		11%
<b>Total respondents: 230</b> <b>Skipped question: 0</b>			

**11.4. Do you think the objectives of ESG have been achieved?**

- to inform and raise the expectations of higher education institutions, students, employers and other stakeholders about the processes and outcomes of higher education




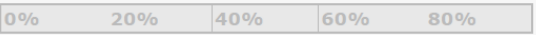
(Each respondent could choose **MULTIPLE** responses.)

Response	Total	% of responses	%
1 YES	81		35%
2 PARTLY	126		55%
3 NO	25		11%
<b>Total respondents: 230</b> <b>Skipped question: 0</b>			

**11.5. Do you think the objectives of ESG have been achieved?**

- to contribute to a common frame of reference for the provision of higher education and the assurance of quality within the EHEA

(Each respondent could choose **MULTIPLE** responses.)

Response	Total	% of responses	%
1 YES	97		42%
2 PARTLY	111		48%
3 NO	25		11%
<b>Total respondents: 230</b> <b>Skipped question: 0</b>			

As to the question whether the objectives of the ESG have been achieved, the picture varied. Both higher education institutions (HEIs) and stakeholders seem to have realised the impact of the ESG, but opinions on this differed, yielding different impressions for internal and external QA.

Almost two thirds of the respondents of the on-line survey were sceptical about the impact of the ESG on higher education in general, and, in particular, their capability of contributing to “vibrant intellectual achievement”. Obviously this relates to the general question as to whether QA leads to a better learning experience for students. Probably the scope of the ESG is being viewed as a catalogue for QA criteria and procedures; but the contribution the standards and guidelines can make to the intellectual life within an institution is only obvious for 31% of the respondents.

*The ESG these are only guidelines, i.e. a general line. Every institution is different and individually creates its own quality assurance system. With reference to University experience it can be concluded that the quality assurance system cannot solve all the institutional problems, but it assists in identifying the causes of problems, undertaking their elimination and searching opportunities for improvement. Barriers that hinder the functioning of the quality assurance system lie in the University culture.*

**Stasys Bučys, Head of Quality Assurance Department, Vilnius Kolegija/University of Applied Sciences, Lithuania [LT03]**

*EQA has proven to be a facilitator to introduce or accelerate new developments in IQA. Not that some developments would not have happened otherwise, but some things are achieved faster. EQA is a stick behind the door. For Example the collection of indicators was previously impossible. Now under the influence of the new accreditation framework it will succeed.*

**Vera Pletincx, Head total quality, Arteveldehogeschool, Belgium [BE02]**

This position corresponds with the scepticism that the ESG can fulfil their aim of informing and raising the expectations of HEIs, students, employers and other stakeholders about the processes and outcomes of higher education. Close to 60% of the respondents thought that they had not achieved this, or, if they had, only in part. Again, in the minds of the respondents, the ESG are closely connected to QA procedures in their predominant scope and objective.

The aims discussed here are not part of the core paragraphs of the ESG. The fact remains that these objectives are ‘inherent’ in the ESG and the reader and practitioner need to read around the facets that suggest hands-on practical advice on what should be taken into account when working on an institution’s QA. So it should be concluded that if the ESG are not yet as effective in achieving these aims, this may be the result of the emphasising the ‘structures’ suggested for adoption. Critically, the aspects of the text that lie beneath these structures are those that are important for daily work.

This ‘structural’ interpretation of the ESG is confirmed by the fact that when asked whether the ESG succeeded in providing a source of assistance and guidance in QA, the number of negative answers was very low (7%). More than 90% of the respondents saw, at least partly, a success story here; half of them were convinced that the ESG had achieved their aim of being useful to HEIs and agencies when they worked on developing their own quality culture. Thus, the ESG have established themselves as one of the main sources for HEIs and agencies when it comes to drawing up processes and procedures, criteria and establishing a culture. As for developing a quality culture the ESG have been helpful indirectly in establishing a quality canvas but they are not seen as key to it. To their considerable credit, the ESG have inspired developments and change in institutions, agencies and organisations.

This holds true especially for the agents of EQA. Half of the respondents were sure that the ESG have influenced the quality approach of and by quality assurance agencies. As two parts of the ESG out of three deal with the QA of QAAs, and as the compliance with the ESG is known to be crucial for the agencies to be awarded ENQA membership or to be listed on the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), the ESG are clearly perceived as setting the parameters and standards for EQA, its actors and audience. Those who believe that this objective is only partly achieved are mainly living and working in countries in transition, where the national QAA has not yet gained enough independence from former structures and actors.

Have the ESG achieved the aim of providing a “common framework”? As will be seen later (cf. Implementation), this largely depends on **a)** when a country has taken up initiatives in QA in higher education (before 2005, after 2005) and **b)** when it joined the Bologna Process.

*The first and the least external assessment of KBS has been implemented in 2005; ESG was just approved then. That means the external assessment in 2005 has not been based on ESG, but actual external assessment procedures correspond to ESG.*

**Sonata Mačiulskytė, Head of Science and Strategic Development office, Klaipėda Business School (KBS), Lithuania [LT02]**

## II.2 Have the stated purposes of ESG been realised?

*Please note: whilst the number of respondents who declared knowing the ESG is lower than the number of respondents for the following question, provided the purposes are mentioned in the question, the authors believed that irrespective of the respondent’s knowledge of the ESG purposes being linked to the ESG as such, the former might have been achieved nevertheless.*

### 12. Do you think the stated purposes of ESG have been realized?

(Each respondent could choose only **ONE** response per sub-question.)

Sub-questions	Resp.	% of responses		
to improve the education available to students in higher education institutions in the EHEA	230	30	60	9
to assist higher education institutions in managing and enhancing their quality and, thereby, to help justify their institutional autonomy	230	39	52	9
help justify the institutional autonomy through managing and enhancing their quality	230	28	56	16
to form a background for quality assurance agencies in their work	230	46	45	9
to make external quality assurance more transparent and simpler to understand for everybody involved	230	41	45	13
Average: 1,74 — Median: 2				
<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #92d050; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <span>1. YES</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #4682b4; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <span>2. PARTLY</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #191970; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <span>3. NO</span> </div> </div>				

Under a third of the respondents are convinced of the direct impact of the ESG on the students’ learning experience, but another 60% state that they have “partly” improved education. Thus, an overwhelming majority of 90% believe in the positive effect of the ESG on education across Europe. Concerning the question of quality enhancement and, as an outcome, more institutional autonomy, over a third of the respondents see a close connection here, whilst more than half (9% deny the connection) attribute it partly to the ESG. This is a clear endorsement, as a means of enhancement and accountability, that QA has become a driver, if not a prerequisite, for institutional autonomy and is perceived as such by the varying HEIs.

*Our institution considers the EQA as useful and necessary. Accountability is generally accepted within the HEIs in Flanders. EQA contributes to organizing IQM (the stick behind the door).*

***Sofie Boone, IQM coordinator, Hogeschool West-Vlaanderen, Belgium [BE03]***

The ESG relevance for the work of QAAs is firmly established: 46% of the respondents say that the ESG form the background for EQA. Another 45% say that it is partly the case. We may assume that this is due to the different stages of QA-evolution that the countries, their HEI and agencies respectively, are at currently. There is a 91% positive response v. only 9% of definite negatives. The ESG are the accepted framework for EQA amongst the vast majority of respondents; and they are seen as an important “transparency instrument”, with only 13% of the respondents failing to see their contribution, i.e., “to make external QA more transparent and simpler to understand” for everybody involved.

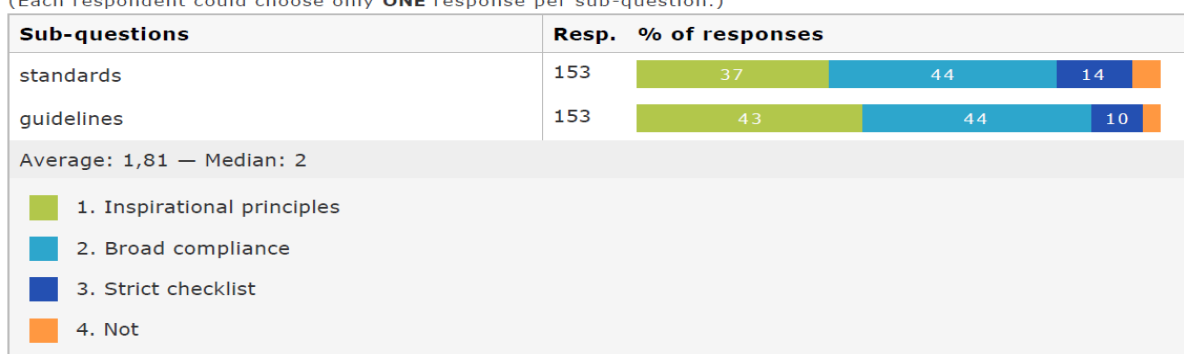
### III. IMPLEMENTATION

When analysing the implementation of the ESG there are three sets of questions and answers that are looked upon: the usefulness of the ESG and the implementation of the ESG in both internal and external QA.

#### III.1 Usefulness of the ESG?

##### 17. How do you use the ESG?

(Each respondent could choose only **ONE** response per sub-question.)



The question as to how the ESG are actually implemented yielded a very large majority responding that the ESG are only used as inspirational principles or in broad compliance. This seems to be a healthy response, since the ESG were never meant to be used as criteria in a strict checklist, but as principles to be translated on the level of Internal Quality Assurance (IQA), EQA and QAAs.

*Two major elements of quality assurance can be distinguished: internal and external. This can be said irrespective of which quality is being discussed, i.e. study, science or performance of the institution. In 2006 Lithuania's Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) translated the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) into Lithuanian and presented the translated guidelines at the national conference. The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) now performs three main types of evaluation:*

- Evaluation of existing study programmes;
- Evaluation of new study programmes;
- Institutional review of HEI.

**Stasys Bučys, Head of Quality Assurance Department, Vilnius Kolegija/University of Applied Sciences, Lithuania [LT03]**

*[...] We used the ESG to create our own QA. A lot of our guidelines were developed in relation with the ESG, chapter 1, but only inspirational, the other chapters were implemented through the national system of external QA.*

**David Almeida, Student, Estoril Higher Institute for Tourism and Hotel Studies, Portugal [PT01]**

*The ESG are sometimes too limited (e.g. not all stakeholders are included: graduates, employers, partners...) and sometimes a bit too concrete. The standards should be broader, since it sometimes resembles a checklist. The ESG go beyond just TQM, but indicate where the HEI in terms of "education" must meet. It is about 'quality' rather than 'quality management'. On the other hand, they are based on an old approach to quality assurance.*

*Meanwhile, newer systems exist for institutions to guarantee the quality. E.g. the element on 'procedures for quality assurance': there are other ways in which quality can be secured e.g. SharePoint / wikis.*

**Vera Pletincx, Head total quality, Arteveldehogeschool, Belgium [BE02]**

*Les dispositions institutionnelles influencées par l'AQ:*

- La « Qualité » est inscrite dans le projet stratégique
- Ont définis : un axe qualité et des objectifs à atteindre, une culture se développe
- Un Vice-président identifié et nommé sur ce thème
- Une chargée de mission
- Les évaluations externe par les agences sont désormais identifiées en lien avec la qualité et gérées en conséquence (projet, planning, pilote, conférences...)
- Des démarches processus qualité dans de nombreux domaines sont mises en œuvre.<sup>3</sup>

**Sabine Goulin, Directrice de la Délégation à l'Aide au Pilotage et à la Qualité (DAPEQ), Université de Lorraine, France [FR01]**

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<sup>3</sup> Institutional provisions influenced by QA:

'Quality' is transcribed into the strategic project

Were defined: a quality axis and goals to reach, a culture is developing

A clearly identified Vice-President named on this matter

A Project Officer

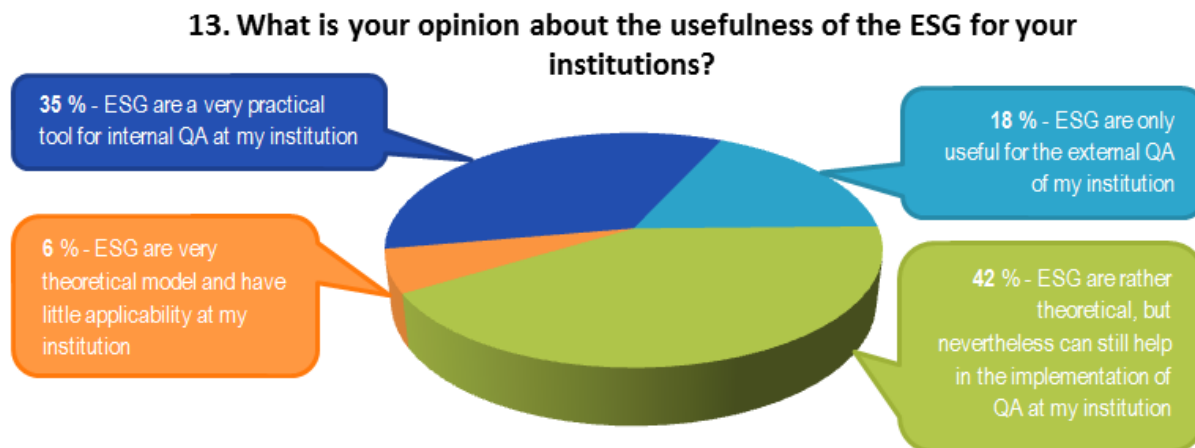
External evaluations by the agencies are now identified in relation to quality and managed accordingly (project, planning, responsibility, conferences...)

Quality processes activities in numerous areas are put in place. (translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE)



### III.2 Usefulness of the ESG for the institution?

The same conclusion on implementation can be drawn from the questions about the usefulness of ESG for institutions.



42% of the respondents believe that the ESG are rather theoretical, but can nonetheless help in the implementation of QA at institutional level. Once again the healthy mix of inspirational principles gains the majority, whilst 35% think the ESG form a very practical instrument. What are perceived to be the most useful of the ESG elements towards the enhancement of internal quality 'differ' across institutions, showing how readily the ESG can adapt to each institution's needs.

Looking at the geographical spread of the opinions on the practicality of the ESG, there is a possible link with the history of the development of a national QA system. In countries where a national QA system was developed before 2005, as is the case in the Netherlands and Finland, the ESG are regarded as a more theoretical framework. Whilst in countries where a national QA system was developed after 2005, such as Bulgaria and Kazakhstan, the ESG are more regarded as a practical instrument. It is known that in the latter countries, the ESG were more than inspirational to the development of a national external QA system. Thus the ESG entered into IQA via EQA. Yet this has never been the concept nor the aim of the ESG. The in-depth interviews confirm this contemporary historical dimension.

*[...] l'AQ externe a amené l'établissement à renforcer les dispositifs de maitrise de ses pratiques et de ses processus. Il se connait mieux : forces et faiblesses. La modernisation des processus administratifs est liée à l'autonomie renforcée des HEI et des dispositifs AQ externe. L'AQ externe est un levier.<sup>4</sup>*

**Sabine Goulin, Directrice de la Délégation à l'Aide au Pilotage et à la Qualité (DAPEQ), Université de Lorraine, France [FR01]**

<sup>4</sup> External quality assurance induced a reinforcement of the institution's devices to control its processes and practices. The institution knows itself better, its strengths and weaknesses. The modernisation of administrative processes is linked to the HEIs' reinforced autonomy, and to external QA devices. External QA is a lever. (translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE)

It has previously been mentioned that what is perceived as the most useful of the ESG elements towards enhancing internal quality differ, depending on the institutional context. This shows how adaptable the ESG may be and the fruitfulness of their implementation in different institutions.

- *Partie 1.1 Le volet pilotage et management (Politique et procédures pour le management de la qualité)*

- *Partie 1.2 Approbation, examen et révision périodique des programmes et des diplômes Ainsi que la mise en « systémique » de l'ensemble des dispositifs d'évaluation et d'information via le chapitre 1.6 notamment sur le mot « utilisent »*

- *1.6 Systèmes d'information : Les établissements doivent garantir qu'ils collectent, analysent et utilisent les informations nécessaires au pilotage efficace de leurs programmes de formation et autres activités.<sup>5</sup>*

**Sabine Goulin, Directrice de la Délégation à l'Aide au Pilotage et à la Qualité (DAPEQ), Université de Lorraine, France [FR01]**

*Ce sont les points sur lesquels nous sommes le plus en retard : 1.2 et 1.4 Concernant le pilotage et l'examen périodique des formations (1.2), les équipes ne sont pas encore dans la prise de conscience d'un processus continu d'amélioration sur la base des analyses de résultats. Pourtant, nous avons développé pas mal d'outils à Pau pour l'autoévaluation des programmes, mais cela ne contribue pas encore à une vraie remise en question.<sup>6</sup>*

**Chargée de mission Evaluation et appui au pilotage des formations, Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour (UPPA), France [FR02]**

*The need to have efficient and effective organizational structures within which the academic programmes can be provided and supported.*

**Vice-President of a Polytechnic Institute, Portugal [PT02]**

*I think for our institution the most useful elements are assessment of students, learning resources and student support.*

**Nijole Galdikiene, Deputy Director for Strategic Development, Klaipeda State College, Lithuania [LT01]**

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<sup>5</sup> Part 1.1 the management and monitoring side (Policy and procedures for quality assurance)

Part 1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards. As well as the 'systemic' implementation of all the evaluation and information devices via chapter 1.6, especially on the word 'use'

Part 1.6 Information systems: Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes of study and other activities. (*translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE*)

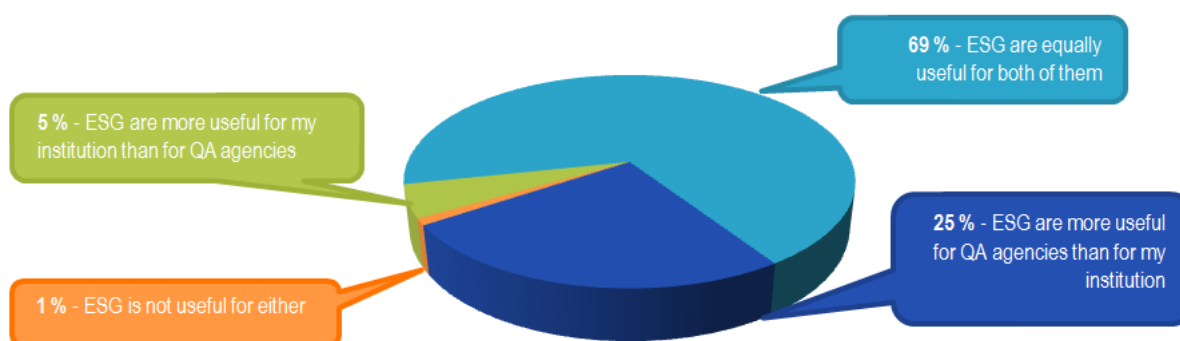
<sup>6</sup> 1.2 and 1.4 are the parts in which we lag behind the most. Regarding the monitoring and periodic review of programmes (1.2), staff have not realised yet the continuous improvement process based on the results' analysis. However, we have developed quite a few tools for programmes self-evaluation in Pau, and yet this does not contribute to truly question ourselves at this time. (*translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE*)

*Assessment: the assessment part will become increasingly important, e.g. How to assess the key learning outcomes? This element should be further developed, so that in the future it becomes the most useful element for the institutions.*

**Frederik de Decker, Senior staff member for education, Ghent University Association, Belgium [BE01]**

### III.3 Usefulness of the ESG for QAAs v. Institutions?

#### 14. With which statement do you agree?



This finding is confirmed by the different national responses on the usefulness of the ESG at institutional level as compared to QAAs. A large majority (69%) think that the ESG are equally useful for both, whilst 25% think that the ESG are more useful for QAAs and only 5% think that they are more useful for the institution.

*The mission [of the NGO] is academic quality enhancement. One of the tools used is promotion of the quality culture and development of QA on internal and external levels within Central Asian region. [the NGO] coordinates on QA level Tempus funded project CANQA – Central Asian network for QA and accreditation and responsible for development of standards and guidelines, expert capacity building and promotion of the QA culture. An independent accreditation agency was founded [by the NGO] in Kyrgyzstan in 2010. CANQA mission implemented through [the NGO] is uniting Central Asian HE area in QA heavily based on EHEA, the Bologna principles and ESG in particular regarding EQA topics. The relevant methodologies and documents have been developed. Development of the national legislation on QA is one of the [NGO]’s activities. Another [NGO]’s responsibility is promotion on internal quality assurance within HEIs, expert capacity building, comparative analysis of existing models and trainings for HEIs staff.*

**CEO of educational NGO, operational in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan [KZ01]**

*Au niveau de la démarche qualité interne, je m’efforce de diffuser les ESG et de les présenter comme « Le référentiel » mais peu de collègues les connaissent et les reconnaissent comme référence. D’autant que les formations que j’ai incitées il y a 2 ans à présenter leur dossier d’autoévaluation à l’AERES selon les ESG se sont fait retoquer par l’AERES qui leur a reproché de ne pas avoir suivi leur méthodologie (pourtant présentée comme « à utiliser à défaut d’avoir sa propre méthode »)...*

*Il y a cependant une ambiguïté dans la mesure où les grilles d’autoévaluation de l’AERES ne sont pas structurées selon les ESG. Ceci enlève beaucoup de légitimité aux ESG auprès de l’équipe de direction de l’UPPA et des responsables de formations (cf. II-1). L’évaluation menée par l’AERES remonte à deux ans et demi (vague A). Les documents de référence de l’époque mentionnaient très brièvement les ESG.<sup>7</sup>*

***Chargée de mission Evaluation et appui au pilotage des formations, Université de Pau et des Pays de l’Adour (UPPA), France [FR02]***

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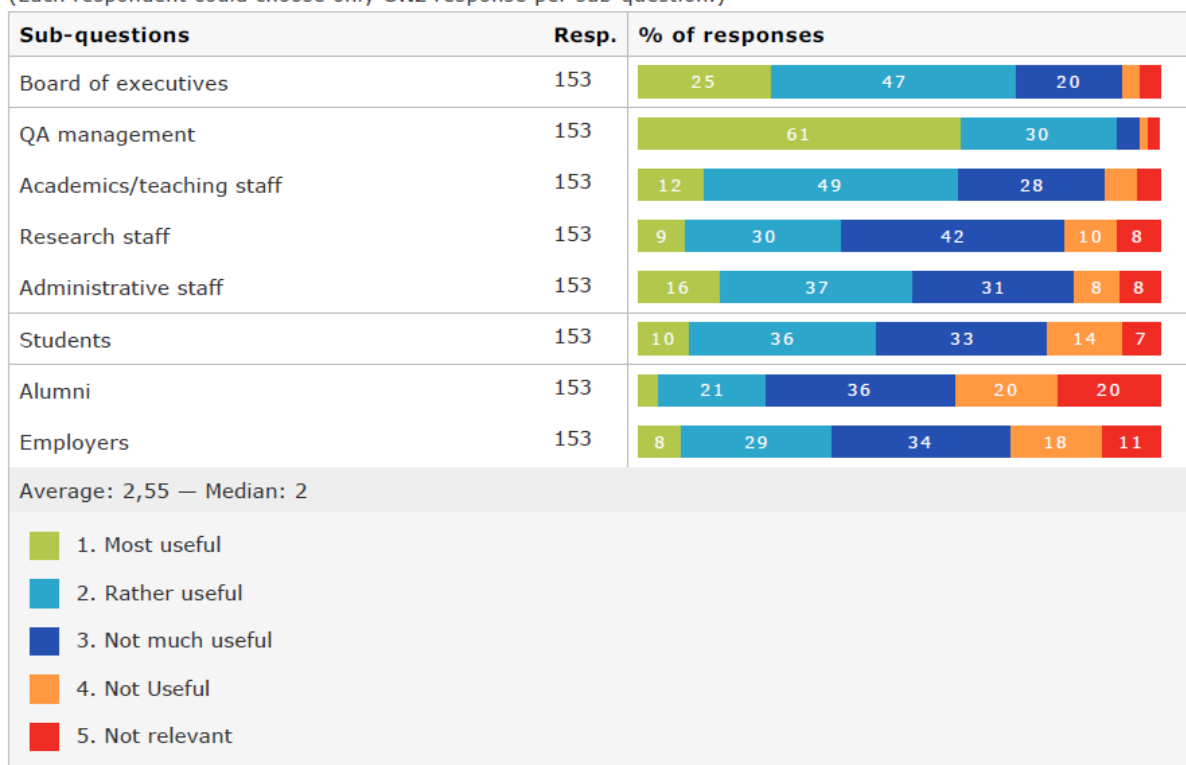
<sup>7</sup> On the level of Internal quality approach, I strive to spread the ESG and to present them as ‘the referential’, but few colleagues know them and acknowledge them as a reference. Especially since the programmes I encouraged to submit their self-evaluation to the AERES [French quality assurance agency] 2 years ago, have been refused by the AERES, which criticised them for not following AERES methodology (even though presented as ‘to be used when no own methodology is available’)...

There is however an ambiguity in the sense that AERES’ self-evaluation grids are not structured according to the ESG. This reduces a lot the ESG legitimacy in the eyes of the UPPA management team and the programme directors (see II.1). The AERES-led evaluation dates back to 2 years ago (first wave). Reference documents of the time mentioned the ESG very briefly. (translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE)

### III.4 Usefulness of the ESG to the different actors in the institution?

**15. Tick the degree of usefulness of the ESG to the different actors in your institution.**

(Each respondent could choose only **ONE** response per sub-question.)



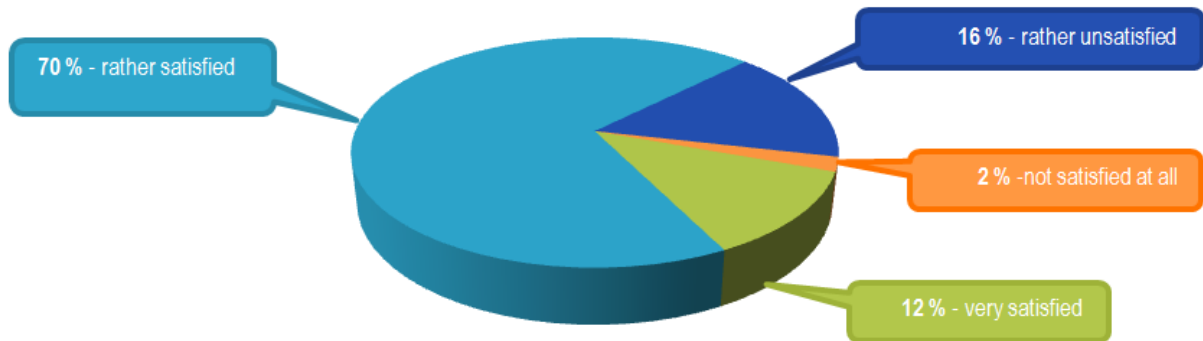
Concerning the question of the usefulness of the ESG for the different institutional actors, a large majority (61%) experience that the ESG are most useful to QA management. It is an encouraging observation that the second category, to whom ESG are most useful, is identified as the Board of Directors/the Management. This means that the top management of institutions take a significant responsibility in leadership for QA. On the other hand, the fact that the usefulness for academics or teaching staff is only considered by 12% - which is lower than for the administrative staff (16%) – is an indication that QA is still regarded as top-down and as an administrative task rather than the guidelines and QA residing at the heart of professional life for academics. The fact that the ESG were approved in 2005 and first implemented in the national development of EQA and for the registration of QAAs by EQAR from 2008 onwards certainly plays a role here. In many countries, this preceded a healthy and participative IQA system at institutional level. The fact that the ESG’s usefulness to other stakeholders of HE (students, alumni and employers) is only rated from 10% to 3%, indicates that the ESG are not specifically focusing on them, or addressing their potential involvement (although the ESG strongly advocate the stakeholders’ model and the participation of the students) and that these stakeholders are not, yet, very close to QA.

*[...] On the whole students do not know the ESG.*

**David Almeida, Student, Estoril Higher Institute for Tourism and Hotel Studies, Portugal [PT01]**

### III.5 Satisfaction with the implementation of the ESG by the QAAs?

#### 16. How satisfied is your institution with the implementation of the ESG by QA agencies?



The fact that 70% of all respondents are rather satisfied with the implementation of the ESG by QAAs shows that most know the ESG relationship with external QA through QAAs, and 70% think that the relationship is healthy. At the same time they are conscious of some tensions. The low percentages of both extremes (very satisfied 12% and not satisfied at all 2%) illustrate that the relationship between internal and external QA, in a minority of examples, could be more evenly balanced.

*Because education in Flanders moves in small circles/is a small world, many people know each other and mutual impacts cannot be avoided. Area for improvement: a more international character of the review panel. Compared to French-speaking Belgium, where more international panel members are included in the review panels for EQA. A possible disadvantage of such a system could be that the identity and context are not always known. On the other hand an advantage is the independence and non-alignment of the review panel in respect of the study programme, including 'out of the box' thinking. This is not necessarily relevant at the moment, but encourages further developments. The inclusion of more international review panel members may be more difficult in a country with a minority language (like in Flanders).*

**Frederik de Decker, Senior staff member for education, Ghent University Association, Belgium [BE01]**

1 : Les référentiels des Agences Nationales pour AQ externe font références aux ESG  
2 : Pendant les visites AQ externe, les experts présents ne connaissent pas/peu les ESG et n'évaluent pas l'efficacité des dispositifs d'AQ ou très partiellement.  
3 : les AQ externes ne tiennent pas assez compte des pratiques des établissements et n'évaluent pas encore le dispositif d'amélioration continue (ou d'AQ) et son efficacité.  
4 : Cependant, les évaluations externes ont un effet levier sur la mise en place des dispositifs d'AQ interne.<sup>8</sup>

**Sabine Goulin, Directrice de la Délégation à l'Aide au Pilotage et à la Qualité (DAPEQ),  
Université de Lorraine, France [FR01]**

Although former surveys on institutions and IQA seem to indicate that they were less aware of the ESG and used the ESG far less at institutional level, the EURASHE survey responses seem to contradict this. Not only does awareness at institutional level seem high, but also the implementation of the different aspects of the ESG in IQA appears to be very high. This could indicate that the different ESG elements are recognised to be essential to IQA, yet without being wholly identified as elements of the ESG. It would be important to investigate whether this difference in degree of knowledge and implementation is dependent on the sector (university – non-university higher education) under survey, at the time of implementation (which would mean later in the non-university sector), or whether influenced by both factors.

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<sup>8</sup> 1: the National external quality assurance agencies' referential mention the ESG

2: During External QA visits, experts present do not know, or know little about, the ESG, and do not evaluate the QA processes' efficacy or very partially.

3: External QA do not take enough into account the institutions' practices and do not evaluate yet the process of continuous improvement (or of QA) and its efficacy.

4: However, External evaluations have a lever effect for the implementation of Internal QA processes. (translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE)



### III.6 Elements connected to the IQA of the institution?

#### 9. Are the following elements part of the Internal QA of the institution you are connected to?

(Each respondent could choose only **ONE** response per sub-question.)

Sub-questions	Resp.	% of responses	
Policy for QA	230	88	12
Procedures for QA	230	88	12
Periodic review of programme	230	88	12
Assesment of students	230	87	13
QA of teaching staff	230	81	19
Learning resources	230	80	20
Student support	230	78	22
(A) system(s) to gather information for the management of the study programmes	230	75	25
Information about programmes and awards available to the Public	230	74	26
Average: 1,18 — Median: 1			
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; gap: 10px;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #92d050; border: 1px solid black;"></div> 1. YES                 </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; gap: 10px; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #3498db; border: 1px solid black;"></div> 2. NO                 </div>			

The fact that “policy for QA” is rated highest in terms of implementation of the elements of QA in the institutions, may not be unrealistic, since the ESG are a Bologna document and are seen by many as a political decision, or certainly influenced by national, and thus political, implementation. The fact that in some countries, and certainly in some institutions, the development of IQA has only recently begun, or is being, re-designed, adds to this perception of being primarily a ‘policy for QA’. From the analysis of the general use of the ESG, it has already become clear that IQA is primarily seen as a matter for executives and QA (administrative) management.

It is significant to note that much attention is paid to student assessments – an observation made in the on-line survey as well as in the in-depth interviews.

The fact that the lowest score of ESG implementation is given to “information and public availability of QA results” may not be entirely surprising. In some countries where the national EQA has only recently been developed or changed, no reports have been published as yet. Even in countries where an EQA has been in place for a period of time, the quality culture has not yet reached a stage where information about programmes and awards from IQA are made public. Self-evaluation reports are seldom in the public domain and in most cases only used for internal aims and/or in preparation of external site-visit and reports. The fact that 74% of our respondents gave a high rating to ‘publicly available information’ may refer to information in course guides, on curricula and degrees available on the institutions’ websites or in folders, but which may not be a result of IQA.

*We have QA policy and associated procedures, a timetable for monitoring and reporting of results. Students, staff and other stakeholders are involved in QA. We also have a list of evaluation criteria and indicators, etc. By comparing our QA system with ESG we know which parts are weakest in our institution. For example we start to inform the public about the results of external evaluation of our study programmes, annual report of Director and other information, but we have to develop the system information (for internal and external stakeholders; e.g. now accreditation results are on our website).*

***Nijole Galdikiene, Deputy Director for Strategic Development, Klaipeda State College, Lithuania [LT01]***

*In accordance with the ESG, the whole internal quality assurance system of the University is formalized by the following means: a Quality manual has been prepared, the stages and terms of implementation of the system have been defined, the orders concerning quality questions have been issued, etc., a department responsible for the system's implementation and development has been established, the University Quality Board has been set up, working groups play their role solving various questions, and etc. For example, regulation in accordance with the ESG number 1.2. states: 1.2. Approval, monitoring and periodic review of study programmes. Similarly, number 1.7. states: 1.7. Public information. Our University regularly publishes up to date impartial and objective information both quantitative and qualitative, study programmes and institution evaluation reports on our University website. In the mentioned processes the regulations of the ESG play a significant role.*

***Stasys Bučys, Head of Quality Assurance Department, Vilnius Kolegija/University of Applied Sciences, Lithuania [LT03]***

*Our institutional arrangements for QA are influenced by ESG in the part of internal quality assurance, external quality assurance, and agencies of quality assurance. The university has developed policy, guidelines, standards and procedures of the university's internal quality assurance. I monitor the quality assurance system of the university's structural units by internal auditing on constant base due to the adopted annual program of internal quality assurance. The external quality assurance is conducted by the Ministry of education and science in the form of attestation once in five years.*

***Elena Milova, Head of the Department for Quality Management, Korkyt Ata Kyzylorda State University (KKSU), Kazakhstan [KZ03]***

*KBS arrangements for QA are based on the ESG standards:*

- 1. We have a policy and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of our programmes and awards. The strategy, policy and procedures have a formal status and are publicly available. We also include a role for students and other stakeholders.*
- 2. We have formal mechanisms for the approval, periodic review and monitoring of our programmes and awards.*
- 3. Students are assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures, which are applied consistently.*

4. We try to ensure that our staff recruitment and appointment procedures include a means of making certain that all new staff have at least the minimum necessary level of competence. Teaching staff are given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching capacity and are encouraged to value their skills.

5. We try to ensure that the resources available for the support of student learning are adequate and appropriate for each programme offered.

6. We pay a big attention to collection, analysis and relevance of information for the effective management of our programmes of study and other activities.

7. We regularly publish up to date, as we understand impartial and objective information about the programmes and awards we are offering. Also we improve our public informing every year.

**Sonata Mačiulskytė, Head of Science and Strategic Development office, Klaipeda Business School (KBS), Lithuania [LT02]**

### III.7 Internal QA redesigned?

Most respondents mentioned that their institutions employed an IQA system, and even an EQA, a number of years before the publication of the ESG. However under the influence of the QAAs, most institutions changed their IQA, aligning it with the ESG standards. The impact of the QAAs on EQA, as well as on IQA, is considerable. It should be said that policy changes of the QAAs and conversion towards the ESG are strongly influenced or steered by governmental decisions, new legislation, international pressure and the fact that both ENQA and EQAR use the ESG as criteria.

*En 2006, j'ai construit, sur la base de l'ancien référentiel CNE, un référentiel qualité Licence interne à l'UPPA (Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour) très détaillé (60 critères) mais couvrant moins de champs que les ESG. Je l'ai adapté de manière empirique et non contraignante pour les formations. Quand j'ai eu connaissance des ESG, je m'en suis servi pour montrer en interne que l'objectif était encore plus ambitieux que ce que je proposais dans cette première étape. Récemment, nous avons décidé d'abandonner notre référentiel interne, devenu moins pertinent en régime de croisière, et de prendre les ESG comme référentiel.<sup>9</sup>*

**Chargée de mission Evaluation et appui au pilotage des formations, Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour (UPPA), France [FR02]**

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<sup>9</sup> In 2006 I created, based on the previous CNE [French predecessor to AERES, National evaluation agency] referential, a very detailed (60 criteria) UPPA (Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour) internal Licence [EQF6] quality referential, which however covered fewer areas than the ESG. I adapted it empirically and on a non-constraining basis for the programmes. When I learned about the ESG, I used them to show internally that the objective was even more ambitious than what I proposed in this first stage. Recently, we decided to drop our internal referential, which became less pertinent in the long-term use, and to use the ESG as referential. (translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE)

*[...] Driven by the new accreditation framework that will be implemented in Flanders from 2013 on, the total quality management system is currently redesigned.*

***Vera Pletincx, Head total quality, Arteveldehogeschool, Belgium [BE02]***

*We did some correction in our institutional "Guide for QA" according to recommendation of ESG. This year we created a new project (funded by EU) to accomplish our internal QA system according the European requirements.*

***Nijole Galdikiene, Deputy Director for Strategic Development, Klaipeda State College, Lithuania [LT01]***

*Une méthodologie a été développée pour satisfaire aux ESG et au référentiel national de la CTI au sein des 7 écoles d'ingénieurs de l'INPL et pour les aider à développer leur propre dispositif (adaptable et spécifique). Niveau Composante : le conseil et l'accompagnement des écoles dans la mise en place des démarches d'AQ sont pratiqués depuis 2008/2009 et en 2012 des audits/autoévaluation internes seront pratiqués pour les écoles qui ont abouti dans leur processus d'AQ. Le processus d'autoévaluation entre dans le dispositif d'amélioration continue développé. Des travaux sont développés concernant les descriptifs des compétences des diplômés par formation [...].<sup>10</sup>*

***Sabine Goulin, Directrice de la Délégation à l'Aide au Pilotage et à la Qualité (DAPEQ), Université de Lorraine, France [FR01]***

*The University of Helsinki was preparing to its first audit of Quality Assurance System that came true at the end of 2007, the report being published in February 2008. ESG were part of the standards and guidelines for the FinHEEC audit.*

***Aimo Virtanen, Quality Manager, University of Helsinki, Finland [FI01]***

*We are now designing an internal system of QA where ESG have some influence only as of inspiration and primarily chapter 1. But as the external system was set up first, there is of course also an influence from chapter 2 and 3.*

***Vice-President of a Polytechnic Institute, Portugal [PT02]***

Many respondents mention that the IQA has become more consistent, that more attention is paid to students' assessment, that external stakeholders are more involved and that the PDCA (plan-do-check-act) circle is now widely introduced in IQA.

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<sup>10</sup> A methodology was developed to fulfil both the ESG recommendations and the CTI [French QA commission for engineering awards] national referential in the 7 INPL engineering schools, as well as to support them in developing their own (adaptable and specific) procedures. On the departmental level: advice and support is provided to schools in their implementation of QA procedures since 2008/2009, and in 2012 audits/internal self-evaluations will be put in place for the schools which have finalised their QA procedures. The self-evaluation process is part of the developed continuous improvement process. Studies are developed regarding the learning outcomes for each award per programme. (translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE)

*QA is an important part of our 'accountability' not only to students, government and those directly involved but also internationally. In institutions people are more and more thinking about a real quality culture that transcends the purely instrumental part. Institutions want all those involved to consider QA as an automatism. This is not achieved everywhere yet, but there is growing awareness, though. The evolution is still in progress and will take time.*

**Frederik de Decker, Senior staff member for education, Ghent University Association, Belgium [BE01]**

Students' involvement has increased considerably in internal and external QA. Students participate in peer-review panels, in programme and course surveys and formulate recommendations on QA to institutions, higher-education umbrella organisations and governments.

As a consequence of the more cyclical character of external evaluations, attention for IQA policy, processes and procedures increased automatically. Efficiency and workload control are important considerations.

Multiplication effects, mutual learning and exchange of experiences are consequences of international and regional cooperation and networking within the Bologna process including QA development.

Finally some respondents mention that the effect of the ESG is not limited to the QA of students' education. The QA principles are often, directly or indirectly, applied in other institutional domains such as research, administration and management.

*Pour un déploiement complet des ESG et pour les rendre incontournables par les dirigeants des HEI, il conviendrait d'élargir le périmètre :*

- A la recherche
- A l'articulation entre la formation, la recherche et la gouvernance
- Aux processus RH (non seulement les enseignants)

*La rédaction actuelle de la partie 1 est peu explicite face à l'exigence de mise en cohérence globale – un encouragement vers l'approche systémique serait bienvenue et représenterait un atout pour un pilotage global. Par exemple : « La politique de l'établissement doit prendre en compte les interactions ».<sup>11</sup>*

**Sabine Goulin, Directrice de la Délégation à l'Aide au Pilotage et à la Qualité (DAPEQ), Université de Lorraine, France [FR01]**

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<sup>11</sup> For a complete deployment of the ESG, and in order to make them indispensable for HEIs directors, their scope ought to include:

- Research
- Articulation between training, research and management
- HR processes (not only teaching staff)

The current wording of Part 1 is not explicit enough in regards to the imperative of global coherence – encouragements towards the systemic approach would be welcome and would be an asset for a global monitoring. For example: 'the institution's policy must take into account the interactions. (translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE)

*The ESG meets mostly teaching and learning and less the other core functions, like research and community relations and administrative & support services. ESG has supported and strengthened the development of teaching (assessment of students etc.) and feedback systems. The Quality Policy and structures and scope of quality assurance system are more coherent.*

**Aimo Virtanen, Quality Manager, University of Helsinki, Finland [FI01]**

### III.8 Internal QA checked with ESG?

A direct check of IQA against the ESG is rare. Indeed the influence of the ESG on IQA is rather indirect, considering the requirements stipulated by QAAs in the EQA procedures. Institutions know the ESG, especially parts 1 and 2. The ESG principles are implemented in the IQA but the link is rather implicit.

*We harmonised KBS internal quality assurance system with the ESG, when we prepared a new Book for Internal Quality Assurance, in 2007. The ESG holds true since 2005 when it has been approved; we think that KBS internal quality assurance system corresponds to ESG.*

**Sonata Mačiulskytė, Head of Science and Strategic Development office, Klaipeda Business School (KBS), Lithuania [LT02]**

*The ESG are one of the instruments we are using. But we are also looking for EFQM. We didn't actually check the compliance with the ESG for the internal QA. It was more of an inspiration. We know that the ESG were used in order to establish the external QA, since both A3ES and ANECA are registered.*

**Vice-President of a Polytechnic Institute, Portugal [PT02]**

*Developing handbook and guidelines for internal QA we use ESG as an orientation framework. For today, 18 HEIs in 3 countries of Central Asia have developed Internal QA models and standards on EFQM and ISO based models ESG drive.*

**CEO of educational NGO, operational in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan [KZ01]**

*Some experts working at University of Helsinki (e.g. in the field of teaching and studies) have made good use of the ESG. As mentioned in answer 6, the influence is rather informal and indirect. There is no effective check of the ESG but by the bias of FinHEEC it happens.*

**Aimo Virtanen, Quality Manager, University of Helsinki, Finland [FI01]**

*Le dispositif de contrôle interne avec les ESG est en cours de réalisation pour le processus de formation (hors recherche et administration). L'année 2012 devrait nous permettre de vérifier les dispositifs de AQ pour 4 des écoles d'ingénieurs sur les 7 de l'INPL.<sup>12</sup>*

**Sabine Goulin, Directrice de la Délégation à l'Aide au Pilotage et à la Qualité (DAPEQ), Université de Lorraine, France [FR01]**

*The ESG are not a commonly used instrument from which all proceeds. It is used as a touchstone. All elements in the current IQM system remain recognizable.*

**Sofie Boone, IQM coordinator, Hogeschool West-Vlaanderen, Belgium [BE03]**

*Not explicitly, it is not a checklist. I do not feel that this is necessary for the institutions in Flanders, because all have a strong total quality management culture. As VLHORA / VLIR (Flemish QA agencies for university colleges and for universities respectively), are listed agencies in EQAR, the ESG is implicitly part of the Total Quality Management in institutions, because they focus on the analytical framework that the VLHORA and VLIR are using.*

**Frederik de Decker, Senior staff member for education, Ghent University Association, Belgium [BE01]**

*Our university internal quality assurance system is fulfilled by applying quality assessment as well as quality management procedures. Classical management processes are typical peculiar to the system: planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling. Special attention is given to the feedback. The main consumer of services provided by our University is a student. The focus is on his or her competency acquired in the study process, in large part being the result of the activity of University community. Methods, such as surveys of students, graduates, teachers, other stakeholders, individual interviews, meetings, control of implementation of activity plans are also integrated into Vilnius College internal quality assurance system. While modelling the internal quality assurance system the University aimed at building such a system that would be useful for its activity. It was based on the principle: a system serves for an institution, and not an institution works for a system. The Total quality management philosophy implemented by means of self-analysis and benchmarking processes needs to be best suited to the present situation in the University and experience in this area, its possibilities and availability of time, human and other resources.*

**Stasys Bučys, Head of Quality Assurance Department, Vilniaus Kolegija/University of Applied Sciences, Lithuania [LT03]**

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<sup>12</sup> The internal control procedure with the ESG is being realised for the training process (excluding administration and research). 2012 should allow us to check the QA procedures of 4 out of 7 of the INPL engineering schools network. (translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE)

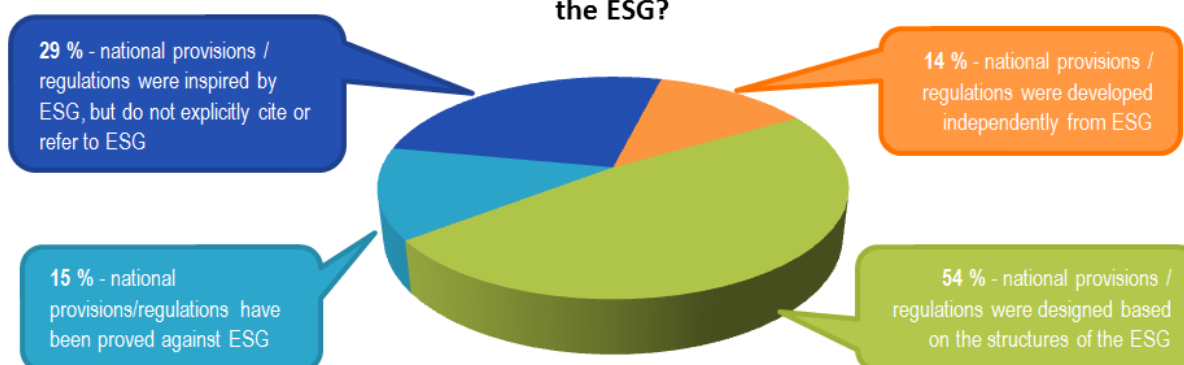


*Management de la qualité du corps enseignant, encore tabou dans les universités françaises (dans la mienne, en tous cas). Pas d'effet direct repérable, les ESG contribuent à la prise de conscience de la nécessité d'entrer dans une démarche qualité pour ne pas rester au bord du chemin.<sup>13</sup>*

**Chargée de mission Evaluation et appui au pilotage des formations, Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour (UPPA), France [FR02]**

### III.9 National QA provisions or regulations connected to the ESG?

#### 10. How are your national QA provisions or regulations connected to the ESG?



More than 50 % of the respondents agreed that national legislation and regulation on QA were redesigned under the influence of the ESG. Several authorities used the 'stick' of the ESG for reorienting the national higher-education policy and for insisting on accountability from HEIs. QA commitments (mandatory external evaluations, accreditations...) and often a feeling of losing institutional autonomy have been consequences of this process. However, most institutions welcome the QA changes and appreciate the stimulating effect of the ESG on the enhancement of institutional autonomy.

*Kazakhstan had a credit transfer system they imported from the USA before Kazakhstan decided to join the Bologna Process). The Kazakhstan HE system as a whole is now preparing a shift to the European ECTS system (grading the scales to the European system).*

**Elena Milova, Head of the Department for Quality Management, Korkyt Ata Kyzylorda State University (KKSU), Kazakhstan [KZ03]**

<sup>13</sup> Quality management of teaching staff, still a taboo in French universities (in mine at least). No direct visible effect, the ESG contribute to the realisation of the necessity to enter a quality approach in order not to fall by the wayside. (translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE)

*The Law on Research and Higher Education states that only accredited study programmes can be provided at HEI. The accreditation of study programmes is based on external evaluation report. The programmes can be accredited for 3 or 6 years. All new study programmes being accredited for 3 years. The internal quality assurance system of our University is inseparable from the external quality assessment, covering study programmes and institutional levels. The issue of internal quality assurance system designing, implementation and its development is becoming more relevant for higher education institutions with the view of ESG. Autonomy granted to higher education institutions is inseparable from their accountability. Although the state by Making laws, other legal acts and assigning finances for higher education institutions, is aiming to make qualitative conditions for activity, but anyway a bigger responsibility to ensure higher education quality falls on the institution itself. Value of institutional autonomy lies in its accountability. A higher education institution must be accountable to groups of interest financing studies, and the state, students who choose the studies and use the provided services, and also labour market that needs well trained specialist.*

**Stasys Bučys, Head of Quality Assurance Department, Vilniaus Kolegija/University of Applied Sciences, Lithuania [LT03]**

*Les agences d'évaluation nationales AERES et CTI (pour les écoles d'ingénieurs) ne pratiquent pas encore d'évaluations externes en prenant appui sur les systèmes AQ de nos établissements. Les dispositifs d'AQ sont encore en cours de développement dans les HEI en France. Les agences prennent de plus en plus appui sur les ESG (mais les auditeurs/experts ne les connaissent pas forcément...) C'est la différence entre « le dire » et « le faire ». Il faut faire attention à la différence entre la logique de développement, d'amélioration de la qualité et la logique descriptive et normative. En outre, les experts sont très centrés sur le guide de l'expert au détriment de la réalité des établissements.<sup>14</sup>*

**Sabine Goulin, Directrice de la Délégation à l'Aide au Pilotage et à la Qualité (DAPEQ), Université de Lorraine, France [FR01]**

Whilst the method of implementing the ESG in IQA seems to be characterised by a healthy mix of inspirational principles, the national QA provisions seem to be more designed on the structure of the ESG. This may be unsurprising. It has been a general observation that, as adopted by the 'Bologna ministers' in 2005, the ESG had their first influence on the development of national EQA systems and the role of QAAs in these. The fact that both ENQA and EQAR, each in their own way, use the ESG as criteria for membership or registration of QAAs, has had a fairly strong impact on both the functioning of QAAs and the national external systems. The national QA provisions, that were only

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<sup>14</sup> The national Quality assurance agencies AERES and CTI (for engineering schools) do not conduct external evaluations basing themselves on our institutions' QA systems yet. QA procedures are still being developed in French HEIs. Agencies base themselves more and more on the ESG (but the auditors/experts do not always know them...). This is the difference between 'the say' and 'the do'. One has to be careful on the difference between the system of quality development and improvement and the descriptive and normative system. Furthermore, experts are very much centred on the expert guide to the detriment of the institutions' reality. (translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE)

inspired by the ESG, represent only a bit more than half of those definitely designed against the ESG structures. Although the ESG took existing (best) practices into consideration whilst being written, the most strictly ESG-based national systems are those developed or redesigned after 2005.

*ESG were identified by [the NGO] as an orientation and key framework within the development of their own national QA frameworks in 3 countries of Central Asia – Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. ESG were put in the focus during learning international experiences, making comparative analysis and development national frameworks. National frameworks will be published and disseminated in autumn 2011. As a long-term perspective, [the NGO] plans to develop and promote Central Asian frameworks based on ESG.*

**CEO of educational NGO, operational in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan [KZ01]**

*The University of Helsinki is preparing the second circle of audits in 2014. Of course the External QA procedures are influenced by international developments in QA and specially the ESG are influencing this.*

**Aimo Virtanen, Quality Manager, University of Helsinki, Finland [FI01]**

*The external evaluation or review is based on a self-evaluation report of the HEI. For external evaluation the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) forms expert teams (local – in case of study programme evaluation, international – in case of institutional review). The key stages in the evaluation process will include self-evaluation, the site-visit, preparation of evaluation report (preparation of the evaluation report, its discussion at advisory committee and publication) and the follow-up activities. External evaluation report is public through our University website.*

**Stasys Bučys, Head of Quality Assurance Department, Vilniaus Kolegija/University of Applied Sciences, Lithuania [LT03]**

According to in-depth interviews the relation between HEIs and EQA happens to be sometimes difficult, but it follows the ESG principles.

*We wish an external assessment would help to identify the weakest aspects of an institution and/or study programme, and to find facilities. However an assessment is sometimes used to show an expert's superiority, sometimes to satisfy his/her personal ambitions or to eliminate a rival.*

**Sonata Mačiulskytė, Head of Science and Strategic Development office, Klaipeda Business School (KBS), Lithuania [LT02]**

*VLHORA and VLIR (Flemish QA agencies for university colleges and for universities respectively) are seen as partners, and rightly so. The accreditation body (NVAO), however, is to my taste too much seen as antagonistic. Some may say that the NVAO does not always keep to its strictly agreed role. Still in my opinion they offer interesting initiatives that contribute to increasing the quality of institutions. NVAO should be considered more like a partner in the whole process.*

***Frederik de Decker, Senior staff member for education, Ghent University Association, Belgium [BE01]***

*The audit process supports a University in its own work, in Finland they use to call it an enhancing method. In that sense an external QA is looked upon as a partner. On the other hand, the evaluation group makes its work independently, without a direct influence from the side of a HEI. University of Helsinki thinks it is too radical to call it an “antagonist”.*

***Aimo Virtanen, Quality Manager, University of Helsinki, Finland [FI01]***

## IV. APPROPRIATENESS

### IV.1 Degree of support of the ESG for QA?

**18. Tick the degree of ESG support to the different characteristics of QA.**

(Each respondent could choose only **ONE** response per sub-question.)

Sub-questions	Resp.	% of responses			
Harmonisation of principles (such as student involvement)	153	24	56	20	
Harmonisation of criteria (how to measure QA)	153	25	51	22	
QA culture	153	31	51	14	
Quality improvement	153	31	50	17	
Improvement of QA procedures	153	32	52	14	
Information to the public	153	15	50	27	8
Fixed reference points (the ones being developed by the Institution for QA)	153	15	57	23	
Average: 2,02 — Median: 2					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #92d050; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 1. Support strongly</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #46b8d0; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 2. Support</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #2e5496; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 3. Support Slightly</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ff7f0e; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 4. Do not support</li> </ul>					

The ESG have evidenced considerable success in supporting the characteristics of QA, such as harmonisation of principles and criteria, quality improvement and culture and the improvement of quality procedures. Overall, more than 90% of the respondents were of this opinion.

The strongest support amongst the topics mentioned above goes to the improvement of quality assurance procedures. This shows that the ESG – although giving HEIs and agencies a wide-range of methods by not defining any – have had an enormous impact on what is going on in QA in the EHEA. They are appropriate for supporting HEIs in the task of QA, as the evidence illustrates.

In taking a closer look at some of the topics of quality culture and improvement, the respondents were overwhelmingly convinced of the appropriateness of the ESG: in both cases the results are almost identical, as over 96% believe that the ESG support quality culture and improvement in varying degrees (support, support strongly or slightly). This is evidence that the ESG, as they were written some years ago, are building a very strong framework for QA. However, these results do not make a difference between direct and indirect influence. However, the responses thus, are not in contradiction with the results of question 9, 11, and 12. The standards and their guidelines indeed have contributed towards the harmonising of QA. This is even more impressive, as stated above: the ESG have this impact without prescribing ways, procedures and methods; they have succeeded in improving and enhancing QA without being a detailed rulebook with boxes to tick. To quote Peter Williams’ nautical metaphor at the 5th EQAF: QA in Europe is indeed: “One fleet, many ships, same destination”.

At one point the good wine is watered down somewhat: when it comes to information to the public and the support for fixed reference points, the “strong support” goes down to 15%, though we have explained the possible reasons for this result. We have already seen that one of the aims of the ESG, that is in the improvement of information, seems to be an area in need of development and enhancement. On the other hand, the publication of complete evaluation or accreditation reports often means a more challenging move for HEIs or agencies than quality development *per se*. In many cases, there is no tradition of public information that contains anything other than solely ‘good news’ on an institution. Regarding the fact that the HEIs are competing for the best students, this is not surprising, and even the ESG have not yet been able to influence, or change this behaviour all over the EHEA-countries. Nevertheless, an additional 50% feel that the ESG “support” information to the public, so we should be encouraged to take this as ‘work in progress’.

Regarding the feature of supporting fixed “reference points for the institutions”, the ESG never aimed at providing them. We have already seen that they have fulfilled their task of being a framework, a fence, or demarcation around QA, and were never meant to be a prescriptive list of features to be checked. If, nevertheless, from 72% of respondents (95%, if we add those who detect a slight support), they receive acclaim for supporting HEIs in developing QA reference points, this is indeed an indicator which ‘exceeds expectations’.

*The University of Helsinki is afraid that the procedures of ESG (through FinHEEC) have been experienced still more binding to something coming outside the University, and the feeling is that every HEI must commit itself to work according to the principles of ESG. This a possible negative point: the ESG give the impression to be developed and compulsory introduced by authorities, as well European as national.*

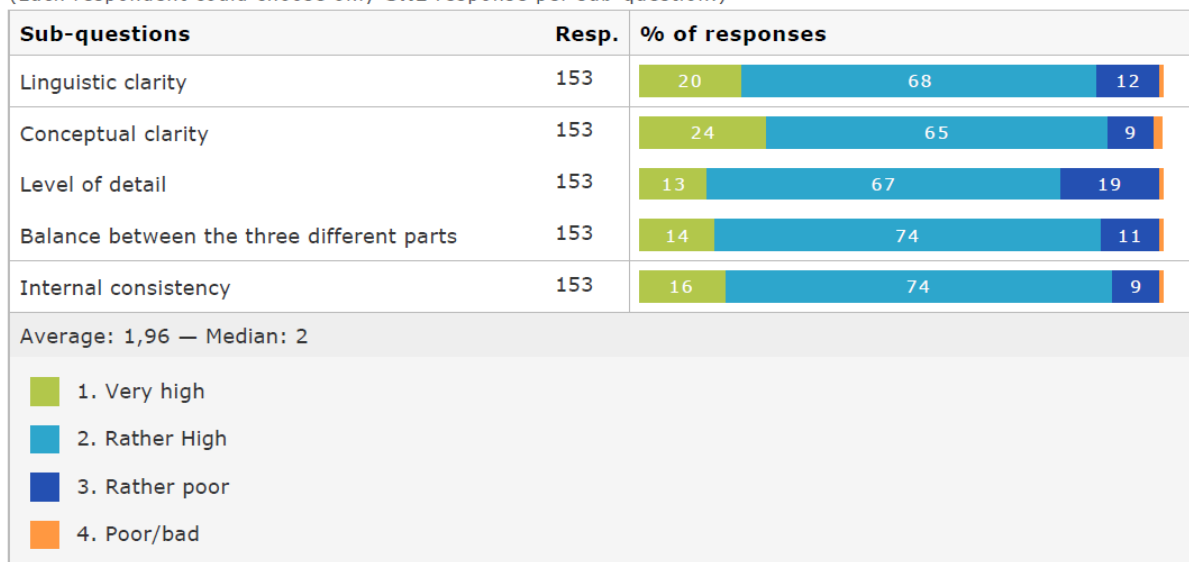
**Aimo Virtanen, Quality Manager, University of Helsinki, Finland [FI01]**

In the opinion of the respondents, the greatest overall support is for the “QA system” itself, and as is generally felt, the ESG are found the least supportive in their “Informative role towards the public”. The assumption that this informative role is embedded in the present QA structures is clearly disproven here. However, respondent support for quality culture and quality improvement is recognised.

## IV.2 Rating the ESG on a set of objective criteria?

### 19. How do you rate ESG on the following criteria? Tick your appreciation of ESG on the following criteria.

(Each respondent could choose only **ONE** response per sub-question.)



The respondents were asked to give an opinion on the “clarity” of the ESG. When looking at the results, we have to bear in mind that the ESG were drafted by a group of people in which the native speakers were a minority. This is also true for the largest part of their past and current readership: for most of them English is a second, if not a third or fourth language.

Even with that possible barrier, 80-90% of the readers felt that the ESG were clear on a very high or rather high level. In several discussions it has been suggested that a glossary added to the ESG would make them easier to understand, but we all have faced the difficulties of defining concepts that have different traditions in different countries and are traditionally perceived in different ways. In the most important area of “conceptual clarity”, the ESG have scored the highest approval: this means that the ESG precepts and narrative communicate effectively to the reader and user. This should be kept in mind when calling for a radical reform of the text. It is the view of EURASHE that ‘radical’ reform at this time is unnecessary.

The “level of detail” is rated lowest in this question, but it is questionable whether this result should be heeded. Providing a detailed description and being a ‘how-to’ document has never been the aim of the ESG. It speaks for the readers that most of them (80 %), having grasped the spirit of the ESG, do not call for greater detail.

*Furthermore, the specific interpretation of the ESG is still dependent on each country. This does not mean that the ESG are too vague. Our institution feels no need for more detailed ESG. The ESG are perceived to be sufficiently generic to serve as reference. The current generic level guarantees the autonomy of the study programme. The ESG should not be a checklist.*

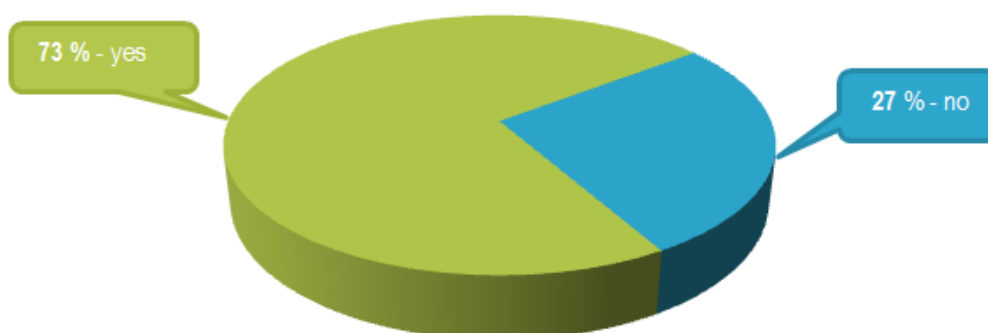
**Sofie Boone, IQM coordinator, Hogeschool West-Vlaanderen, Belgium [BE03]**

## V. REVIEW SECTION

### V.1 Should the ESG be revised?

To the straight question “Should the ESG be revised?” the majority of the respondents answered positively (73%).

#### 20. Should the ESG be revised?



*Since the publication of ESG a lot of changes have occurred in the European Higher Education Area. Consequently, an adaptation of the ESG is justified for example by expanding the element 'assessment' to include the learning outcomes.*

**Frederik de Decker, Senior staff member for education, Ghent University Association, Belgium [BE01]**

*The changes are necessary because the situation is constantly changing. Since the year 2005 some time passed. It is worth mentioning that the transformations need to be not that frequent, well considered and discussed.*

**Stasys Bučys, Head of Quality Assurance Department, Vilniaus Kolegija/University of Applied Sciences, Lithuania [LT03]**

*In my opinion, the pros of the changes direct towards improving the ESG. The cons of the changes may influence negatively on the existing ESG. The university can see a need for QA to assess broader fields than what is presently the remit of the ESG. They mentioned research in this respect. However, when asked more explicitly they declared that a revision of the ESG is something to consider in two or three years. Behind this, of course, is the reality of to what extent the ESG have been implemented in the institutions, etc.*

**Elena Milova, Head of the Department for Quality Management, Korkyt Ata Kyzylorda State University (KKSU), Kazakhstan, [KZ03]**



*Je pense qu'il faut améliorer la cohérence entre les ESG et les règles nationales. Donc, je pense qu'il faut d'abord mieux les faire connaître dans leur mouture actuelle. Il faut mieux les diffuser et mieux les ancrer dans tous les établissements européens avant d'en proposer des modifications.<sup>15</sup>*

**Chargée de mission Evaluation et appui au pilotage des formations, Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour (UPPA), France [FR02]**

- Le risque : alourdir le texte et le rendre normatif

- L'atout : élargir le périmètre, pas seulement formation et ainsi rendre plus crédible pour les dirigeants des universités. (pour cela : compléter le 1.1 et ajouter d'autres points) Garder à l'esprit que les référentiels ne doivent pas dire comment il faut faire, ils doivent laisser la liberté de choisir le « comment ».<sup>16</sup>

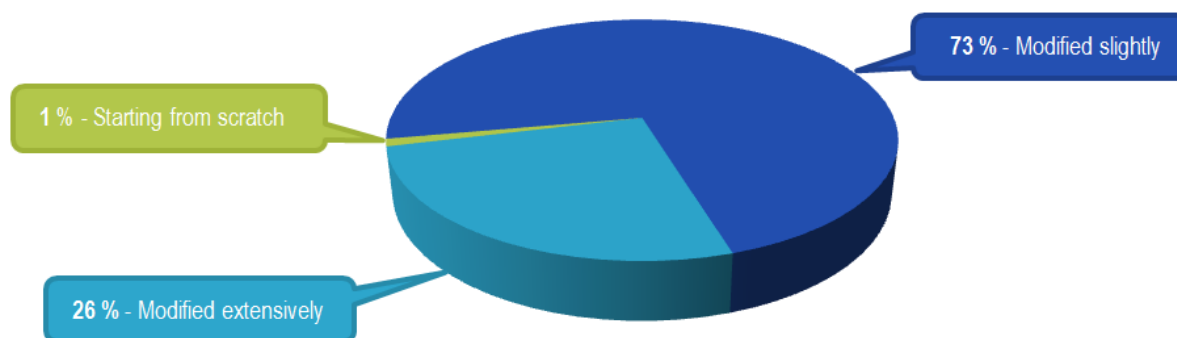
**Sabine Goulin, Directrice de la Délégation à l'Aide au Pilotage et à la Qualité (DAPEQ), Université de Lorraine, France [FR01]**

*The extent of the ESG change depends on the new strategic aims formulated to European HE and on the results. To my mind, actual ESG is not out of date or faulty. It is still a challenge for the most of new EU members.*

**Sonata Mačiulskytė, Head of Science and Strategic Development office, Klaipeda Business School (KBS), Lithuania [LT02]**

## V.2 How should the ESG be revised?

### 21. How should the ESG be revised?



<sup>15</sup> I think the coherence between the ESG and national rules has to be improved. Therefore I think that the ESG have to be first better known in their current structure. They have to be better disseminated and anchored in European HEIs before suggesting to modify them. (translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE)

<sup>16</sup> The risk: to burden the text and make it normative

The advantage: broaden the scope, not only in trainings, thus making them more credible for universities' directors. (To this end: complete Part 1.1 and other points). Keep in mind that the referential are not to say how to do, they are to leave HEIs free to choose the 'how'. (translation provided for informative purposes by EURASHE)

To the question “How should the ESG be revised?” the same percentage (73%) responded that the ESG should be modified slightly; 26% of the respondents said that the ESG should be modified intensively, whilst 1% suggested restarting from scratch.

*It is useful to continue checking one’s own operations against (internationally) relevant frameworks such as the ESG. It is therefore important that the ESG include internationally accepted standards. The added value is that the ESG are not context /region/ country dependent.*

*It is especially important to lift European QA on a supranational level, thus reducing the impact of local authorities on the content of QA. In Flanders, institutions are already very autonomous. In Flanders the government is not involved in the implementation of the QA, so the QA system can be trusted. Abroad very often there is interference from the government. Currently, the process of QA is being reviewed in a number of countries, which is positive for the institutions. ESG can certainly contribute to strengthening the autonomy of institutions.*







**Frederik de Decker, Senior staff member for education, Ghent University Association, Belgium [BE01]**

*For other (Eastern European) countries this is potentially interesting, because there might be a high level of intervention from the government present. In Flanders, this is less a problem. Government does have impact on the organization of EQA, but does so in accordance with the guidelines from Europe (e.g. the ESG) and in consultation with its stakeholders.*

**Vera Pletincx, Head total quality, Arteveldehogeschool, Belgium [BE02]**

**22. If you suggested modification for ESG, tick what should be changed.**

(Each respondent could choose only **ONE** response per sub-question.)

Sub-questions	Resp.	% of responses
Structure into 3 parts	112	
Distinction between Standards and Guidelines	112	
Addition of new elements	112	
'Must' instead of 'should'	112	
Level of awareness among the general public	112	
Average: 1,42 — Median: 1		
		

Where there were suggested modifications for the ESG, the respondents submitted five possible answers. Here is what should be changed, according to them, from the highest to the lowest score:

- 87% of the respondents would like to have the level of awareness amongst the general public changed;
- 75% of the respondents agreed with the addition of new elements;
- 66% of the respondents would like to have the distinction between standards and guidelines modified;
- A minority of 32% of the respondents consider that the structure in three parts needs modification;
- 31% of the respondents wished that “must” be replaced by “should” in the ESG.

*The problem is that every institution adapts different elements related to its own needs. That is why the answer would not be related to the concept of “determining” but mostly towards “guiding”. Internal evaluation of the higher education institutions use statistical data revealing the quality of different institutional work areas. Self-assessment in the University is based on valid and reliable data collection, their codifying, and analysis. Due to this reason, issues of objectivity, openness, reliability and analytical approach of self-analysis occur at all levels. Not reliable data hinder examination of advantages and disadvantages of the activity area under analysis. This problem is related to a quality culture development in an organization. There is a constant need to analyse and evaluate the self-evaluation reports of the university regarding quantitative parameters that reveal real and concrete results of the university work.*

**Stasys Bučys, Head of Quality Assurance Department, Vilnius Kolegija/University of Applied Sciences, Lithuania [LT03]**

*The 3-parts makes sense, and has to be preserved.*

*About the relation between standards and guidelines, guidelines are likely to be interpreted as a clarification of the standards. Starting with a brief statement, followed by an explanation of what is actually meant is the right approach. It is the right thing that the standard captures the essence, which may not always be understood without the guidelines.*

*The ESG should not aim at covering the global dimension. The strength is that currently the ESG describe the achievements in European higher education. This was achieved by including a reasonable uniformity (harmonisation) in European higher education landscape. It will not be obvious to formulate standards and guidelines on a global level. For lack of a specific context, this can lead to depletion / erosion of standards and guidelines for QA.*

*As the ESG are not the same things as ranking / mapping, they should not be intertwined. These are totally different things. Assessment is not a ranking, it is at most a division in large categories.*

**Frederik de Decker, Senior staff member for education, Ghent University Association, Belgium [BE01]**

*Now they [ESG] are too narrowly focused on teaching, and too little attention is given to research and services”*

*The 3 parts makes sense, and should be preserved.*

*Also the division between standards and guidelines is good, and must be preserved.*

*Ideally, the revised ESG should be as extensive as possible, so aim at the global dimension. But this is not realistic*

*About Rankings and mappings: information on ranking should be available for the students but must be performed properly, using the correct categories and according to appropriate criteria.*

***Vera Pletincx, Head total quality, Arteveldehogeschool, Belgium [BE02]***

Some of the stakeholders propose very concrete changes, especially in the field of EQA.

*In item 2.5 there is writing “reports must be made up understandable”. The word ‘understandable’ is not decoded.*

***Naby Yskak Aytkululy, Head of Academic Methodological Center, Kazakh-British Technical University (KBTU), Kazakhstan [KZ02]***

*[What should be added] Evaluation of*

*a) Research*

*b) Community Relations*

*c) Administration, leadership, governance & management*

*d) Support Services.*

***Aimo Virtanen, Quality Manager, University of Helsinki, Finland [FI01]***

*It is desirable to include some quantitative indexes into criteria.*

***Naby Yskak Aytkululy, Head of Academic Methodological Center, Kazakh-British Technical University (KBTU), Kazakhstan [KZ02]***

*Less on 'how' aspects should be addressed, and more focus on 'what' is important for TQM.*

***Vera Pletincx, Head total quality, Arteveldehogeschool, Belgium [BE02]***

Finally there is a consensus that revising the ESG should be achieved through consultation, involving multiple actors. A low-level of awareness amongst the general public was one of the striking findings of the workshops organised by EURASHE.

*Revision should not be in the hands of a few people. The current ESG do not seem to come about through broad consultation. For the next release: please prepare in groups and then consult widely with institutions and agencies.*

***Vera Pletincx, Head total quality, Arteveldehogeschool, Belgium [BE02]***

*Hopefully a participation process for all the countries / HEIs in preparation. At least hearing of those would be necessary. Considering of a couple of alternatives, e.g. in common seminars could be of interest.*

***Aimo Virtanen, Quality Manager, University of Helsinki, Finland [FI01]***

*It's necessary to discuss ESG with participation of all parties concerned, but a decision of changes should be taken by the Committee.*

***Naby Yskak Aytkululy, Head of Academic Methodological Center, Kazakh-British Technical University (KBTU), Kazakhstan [KZ02]***

*The ESG process should be widely discussed in and approved by participating countries and parties. By parties they mean all stakeholders in higher education.*

***Elena Milova, Head of the Department for Quality Management, Korkyt Ata Kyzylorda State University (KKSU), Kazakhstan, [KZ03]***

## VI. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EURASHE

### AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE ESG

- Two thirds of the respondents claim they ‘know’ the ESG, but the degree of knowledge varies greatly.
- Respondents know the ESG mainly through the EQA, and especially in Northern and Western Europe the QAAs are given as the main source.
- The different parts of the ESG are known by over 75 % (part 1), 58 % (part 2) and less than 50 % (part 3).

### AIMS OF THE ESG

- Where the ESG seem to be most effective is when they give hands-on practical advice on what should be taken into account when working on an institution’s QA, whilst in Eastern Europe it is mainly through the implementation of the ESG in the national system and the operating QAAs, sometimes prepared in international projects.
- Whether the ESG achieved the aim of providing a “common framework” for QA, largely depends on **a)** when a country has taken up initiatives in QA in higher education (before 2005, or, after 2005) and **b)** when it joined the Bologna Process. Where this has happened late, the countries may still be moving towards modelling their QA systems according to the ESG, thus, therefore, currently in transition. Otherwise, the ESG are perceived by many as a framework that has direct influence on external rather than on internal QA.

### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ESG

#### Usefulness of the ESG

- There are important ‘regional’ differences in the state of implementation of the ESG in the EHEA.
- A large majority of the reviewed persons say that the ESG are solely used as ‘inspirational principles’ or ‘broad compliance’, rather than as a ‘checklist’ at institutional level.
- There seems to be a link between the history of the development of a national QA system and the ‘use’ that is made of the ESG in a particular country. In countries where a national QA system was developed before 2005, the ESG are regarded more as a theoretical framework, whereas in countries where this happened later, the ESG are regarded more as a practical instrument.
- The countries/regions rate the ‘practical usefulness’ of the ESG very differently, with the ‘new Bologna countries’ rating much higher than those countries who mobilised an advanced

quality system much earlier, and which had been brought in line with the ESG afterwards when redesigning national systems and the operation of the QAAs.

- In identifying and defining the ‘actors’ at institutional level, those who take the greatest benefit from the ESG are Executives, the Board and the QA managers who come largely before the other categories (academic staff, administrators, students and alumni).
- The main impact of the ESG is on the QA system itself, next to support for establishing a quality culture and quality improvement in the institutions.
- Respondents to the survey are by a large majority (70%) “rather satisfied” about the implementation of the ESG by the QAAs, but very few express a ‘high appreciation rate’ (12 %). Judged as per country, we see once again a more positive attitude towards the ESG coming from the ‘new Bologna’ countries.

#### Implementation of the ESG in IQA

- The ESG have contributed most to the implementation of a QA policy in an institution rather than to an internal quality system.
- From the analysis of the general use of the ESG, it has already become clear that IQA is primarily seen as a matter for executives and QA (administrative) management and not that much for academics and students, although the ESG strongly supports the involvement of these groups.

#### Implementation of the ESG in EQA

- The national QA provisions that were ‘inspired’ by the ESG represent only slightly more than half of those that were purposefully ‘designed’ according to the ESG structures. Although the ESG took existing (best) practices into consideration whilst being written, the most strictly ESG-based national systems were the ones developed or redesigned after 2005.

### **APPROPRIATENESS**

- The ESG never aimed at becoming a framework for institutions, so if they are acclaimed for supporting HEIs in developing QA reference points, this is indeed an indicator for ‘exceeding expectations’.
- In most countries there is no tradition of ‘public information’ on the results of QA proceedings, so the role for the ESG in supporting information to the public, we should regard as ‘work in progress’.
- According to our findings on their ‘appropriateness’ the ESG receive the highest rating for “conceptual clarity”, which means that the intention of the ESG has been effectively communicated to the reader and user. Other features such as “level of detail”, “linguistic

clarity”, “internal consistency” and “balance between the different parts” equally receive a relatively low rating.

### IMPACT OF THE ESG

- The standards and guidelines have had the effect of helping to harmonise QA. They have succeeded in improving and enhancing QA without being a detailed rulebook with boxes to tick.
- Most institutions changed their IQA, aligning it with the ESG standards, under the influence of QAAs. Generally, the impact of the QAAs on EQA as well as on IQA is considerable.
- Students’ involvement has increased considerably in both internal and external QA.
- Most institutions know the ESG, especially parts 1 and 2, via EQA. The ESG principles are also implemented in the IQA but the link is rather implicit.
- Most institutions welcome the changes in QA and appreciate the stimulating effect of the ESG on the enhancement of institutional autonomy.

### REVIEW

- A significant number of respondents think that the ESG should be revised, but the majority think that there can only be slight revisions, in the form of an update.
- In some countries the implementation of internal and external QA proceedings in the ‘non-university sector’ (and as a consequence also of the ESG) may have come later than was the case in universities. This means that a full revision of the ESG at this moment would be untimely. This impression is confirmed more precisely in the in-depth interviews, which reveal that some institutions have only recently started implementing them in their IQA.
- There is little doubt that the implementation of the ESG has had a beneficial effect on other activities of institutions than “teaching and learning”, notably in the way “research” is managed in the institution, and also in its “service to the community”. The link between the ESG and the other instruments and realisations of the Bologna Process (of which the ESG have become a cornerstone themselves) are acknowledged by most respondents. However, how they relate to each other can be confusing to many respondents, and therefore, a setting of the ESG in the overall ‘Bologna framework’ is required. This could be added in the introductory text of the ESG document.

Brussels, August 2012



## POSTSCRIPT

The meeting point between the *European Standards and Guidelines* with the now large world of quality assurance is creating a strong basis towards a helpful and profitable union. Institutions have incorporated the ESG variously and usefully in their deliberations on quality assurance. As much in the makeup of ancient and long-standing archetypes in higher education has withstood the challenging tests of time, become less self-embedded and now more open towards modern expectations in accountability and transparency, we should be reminded that quality assurance in many fields is purposed towards identifying and correcting defects before they are carried into the final product. The final product in higher education is the espousing of the best command of knowledge, teaching, learning and their concomitant systems, so to be revealed in successive graduands and graduates, whose prominence can be showcased to the public and employers alike.

It is towards these broad and bold aims that EURASHE strives to achieve the best for students and the professional world of work. Given the almost universal pervasiveness of the entire European Standards and Guidelines, or sections of them, and now in becoming a Bologna cornerstone themselves, EURASHE expresses its commitment to taking stock of their continued reception, oral and written commentary, influence and usage across the professional higher-education institutions, and across and beyond the shores of Europe.

## ANNEXES

### 1. Full on-line questionnaire

<b>1.</b>	<b>First name</b>				
<b>2.</b>	<b>Last Name</b>				
<b>3.</b>	<b>Job title</b>				
<b>4.</b>	<b>Organisation</b>				
<b>*5.</b>	<b>Email address</b>				
<b>*6.</b>	<b>Country</b>				
<b>*7.</b>	<b>Do you know the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG)?</b>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No			
<b>*8.</b>	<b>If so, tell us to what extent are you familiar with the different chapters.</b>	<b>In detail</b>	<b>Well</b>	<b>Notions</b>	<b>Not at all</b>
	PART I - Internal Quality Assurance (QA)	0	0	0	0
	PART II - External Quality Assurance (QA)	0	0	0	0
	PART III - Quality Assurance Agencies (QAAs)	0	0	0	0
<b>*9.</b>	<b>Are the following elements parts of the Internal QA of the institution you are connected to?</b>			<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	Policy for QA			0	0
	Procedures for QA			0	0
	Periodic review of programme			0	0
	Assessment of students			0	0
	QA of teaching staff			0	0
	Learning resources			0	0
	Student support			0	0
	(A) system(s) to gather information for the management of the study programmes			0	0
<b>*10.</b>	<b>How are your national QA provisions or regulations connected to the ESG?</b>	<input type="radio"/> national provisions/regulations were designed based on the structures of the ESG <input type="radio"/> national provisions/regulations have been proved against ESG <input type="radio"/> national provisions/regulations were inspired by ESG, but do not explicitly cite or refer to ESG <input type="radio"/> national provisions/regulations were developed independently from ESG			

<b>*11.</b>	<b>Do you think the objectives of the ESG have been achieved?</b>					
		<b>Yes</b>	<b>Partially</b>	<b>No</b>		
	to encourage the development of higher education institutions which foster vibrant intellectual and educational achievement	o	o	o		
	to provide a source of assistance and guidance to higher education institutions and other relevant agencies in developing their own culture of quality assurance	o	o	o		
	to provide a source of assistance and guidance to QA agencies in developing their own culture of quality assurance	o	o	o		
	to inform and raise the expectations of higher education institutions, students, employers and other stakeholders about the processes and outcomes of higher education	o	o	o		
	to contribute to a common frame of reference for the provision of higher education and the assurance of quality within the EHEA	o	o	o		
<b>*12.</b>	<b>Do you think the stated purposes of the ESG have been realised?</b>					
		<b>Yes</b>	<b>Partially</b>	<b>No</b>		
	to improve the education available to students in higher education institutions in the EHEA	o	o	o		
	to assist higher education institutions in managing and enhancing their quality and, thereby, to help justify their institutional autonomy	o	o	o		
	help justify the institutional autonomy through managing and enhancing their quality	o	o	o		
	to form a background for quality assurance agencies in their work	o	o	o		
	to make external quality assurance more transparent and simpler to understand for everybody involved	o	o	o		
<b>*13.</b>	<b>What is your opinion about the usefulness of the ESG for your institution? Choose one option.</b>					
	o ESG are a very practical tool for internal QA at my institution					
	o ESG are only useful for the external QA of my institution					
	o ESG are rather theoretical, but nevertheless can still help in the implementation of QA at my institution					
	o ESG are a very theoretical model and have little applicability at my institution					
<b>*14.</b>	<b>With which statement do you agree? Choose one option.</b>					
	o ESG are more useful for QA agencies than for my institution					
	o ESG are more useful for my institution than for QA agencies					
	o ESG are equally useful for both of them					
	o ESG are not useful for either					
<b>*15.</b>	<b>Tick the degree of usefulness of the ESG to the different actors in your institution.</b>					
		<b>Most useful</b>	<b>Rather useful</b>	<b>Not much useful</b>	<b>Not useful</b>	<b>Not relevant</b>
	Board of executives	o	o	o	o	o
	QA management	o	o	o	o	o
	Academics/teaching staff	o	o	o	o	o
	Research staff	o	o	o	o	o
	Administrative staff	o	o	o	o	o
	Students	o	o	o	o	o
	Alumni	o	o	o	o	o
	Employers	o	o	o	o	o
<b>*16.</b>	<b>How satisfied is your institution with the implementation of the ESG by QA agencies?</b>					
	o Very satisfied					
	o Rather satisfied					
	o Rather unsatisfied					
	o Not satisfied at all					
<b>*17.</b>	<b>How do you use the ESG?</b>					

	Inspirational principles	Broad compliance	Strict checklist	Not
Standards	0	0	0	0
Guidelines	0	0	0	0

*18. Tick the degree of ESG support to the different characteristics of QA.	Support strongly	Support	Support Slightly	Do not support
Harmonisation of principles (such as student involvement)	0	0	0	0
Harmonisation of criteria (how to measure QA)	0	0	0	0
QA culture	0	0	0	0
Quality improvement	0	0	0	0
Improvement of QA procedures	0	0	0	0
Information to the public	0	0	0	0
Fixed reference points (the ones being developed by the Institution for QA)	0	0	0	0

*19. How do you rate the ESG on the following criteria? Tick your appreciation of the ESG on the following criteria.	Very high	Rather High	Rather poor	Poor/bad
Linguistic clarity	0	0	0	0
Conceptual clarity	0	0	0	0
Level of detail	0	0	0	0
Balance between the three different parts	0	0	0	0
Internal consistency	0	0	0	0

*20. Should the ESG be revised?
<input type="radio"/> Yes
<input type="radio"/> No

*21. How should the ESG be revised?
<input type="radio"/> Starting from scratch
<input type="radio"/> Modified extensively
<input type="radio"/> Modified slightly

*22. If you suggested modification for the ESG, tick what should be changed.	Yes	No
Structure into 3 parts	0	0
Distinction between Standards and Guidelines	0	0
Addition of new elements	0	0
'Must' instead of 'should'	0	0
Level of awareness among the general public	0	0

*23. Should the ESG refer to the following aspects of the European dimension of QA?	Very much	Rather much	Not a lot	Not at all
European Qualification Framework (EQF)	0	0	0	0
Qualification Frameworks (QFs)	0	0	0	0
European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)	0	0	0	0
Diploma Supplement (DS)	0	0	0	0
Employability	0	0	0	0
Learning Mobility	0	0	0	0
Recognition	0	0	0	0
Learning outcomes	0	0	0	0
Europass	0	0	0	0
Other, please specify	0	0	0	0

<b>*24.</b>	<b>How useful should the revised ESG be for the different actors?</b>				
	<b>Most useful</b>	<b>Rather useful</b>	<b>Not much useful</b>	<b>Not useful</b>	
	Board of executives	0	0	0	
	QA management	0	0	0	
	Academics/teaching staff	0	0	0	
	Research staff	0	0	0	
	Administrative staff	0	0	0	
	Students	0	0	0	
	Alumni	0	0	0	
	Employers	0	0	0	
	Comment				
<b>*25.</b>	<b>Should the revised ESG deal more explicitly with the following dimensions?</b>			<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	Mission of the institution	0	0	0	0
	Mobility of students	0	0	0	0
	Recognition of learning units	0	0	0	0
	Recognition of degrees	0	0	0	0
	Quality of student services	0	0	0	0
	Employment guidance for students	0	0	0	0
	Guidance for potential students	0	0	0	0
	Human Resource Management	0	0	0	0
	Financial management	0	0	0	0
	Quality of research	0	0	0	0
	Research management	0	0	0	0
	Alumni	0	0	0	0
	Employers of graduates	0	0	0	0
	Stakeholder model	0	0	0	0
	European dimension	0	0	0	0
	European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)	0	0	0	0
	Global Quality Assurance (international dimension)	0	0	0	0
	Quality enhancement	0	0	0	0
	Accountability	0	0	0	0
	Mapping Quality of institutions	0	0	0	0
	Mapping Quality of programmes	0	0	0	0
	Rankings	0	0	0	0
	Other, please specify	0	0	0	0
<b>26.</b>	<b>Please use the space below to share with us some of your experiences as far as the ESG are concerned. Feel free to add any comments.</b>				
<b>*27.</b>	<b>Would you like to be informed about the results of the survey?</b>				
	<input type="radio"/> Yes				
	<input type="radio"/> No				

## 2. List of participating countries

Country	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Belgium	26	11,3%
The Netherlands	22	9,6%
Slovenia	16	7,0%
Bulgaria	14	6,1%
Romania	12	5,2%
United Kingdom (England, Wales Northern Ireland / Scotland)	12	5,2%
Finland	10	4,3%
Lithuania	10	4,3%
Kazakhstan	9	3,9%
Malta	9	3,9%
Portugal	9	3,9%
Ireland	7	3,0%
Cyprus	6	2,6%
Germany	6	2,6%
Croatia	5	2,2%
Czech Republic	4	1,7%
France	4	1,7%
Hungary	4	1,7%
Latvia	4	1,7%
Sweden	4	1,7%
Switzerland	4	1,7%
Turkey	4	1,7%
Austria	3	1,3%
Bosnia & Herzegovina	3	1,3%
Estonia	3	1,3%
Italy	3	1,3%
Albania	2	0,9%
Denmark	2	0,9%
Georgia	2	0,9%
Greece	2	0,9%
Russia	2	0,9%
Slovakia	2	0,9%
Armenia	1	0,4%
Norway	1	0,4%
Poland	1	0,4%
Serbia	1	0,4%
Spain	1	0,4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>100,0%</b>

### 3. MAP-ESG interview document

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**Interview code:**

**Interviewer:**

**Duration of the interview:**

**Date of the interview:**

**Place of the interview:**

**Language of the interview:**

**Any other comments to the interview:**

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#### Instructions for the interviews

1. Please record the interview. It is important to have it for the later control to check whether all important issues have been mentioned in the transcribed/written form of the interview.
  2. In case you won't be doing the interview in English, we recommend making for yourself a national language version of the interview template prior to the interview
  3. After the interview please transcribe in English/French eventually German the information into the corresponding tables/cells with as much detail as possible
  4. Assign a code to each of the interviews you carry out (country / number / MESH / interviewers' initials)
  5. Deadlines: a) 10 June – presentation of chosen interview strategy and of interviewees;  
B) 30 June – end of interviews and presentation of results obtained
- 

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#### Identification

Country

Region/community

Organisation, association department, institution

Name of the respondent

Function

E-mail

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#### I. Knowledge of the ESG

##### 1. How did you become acquainted with ESG?

- Through external QA?
- Through national legislation?
- Through internal QA?

Please type the answer:

---

##### 2. Tell me about your personal experience with ESG.

Please type the answer:

---

##### 3. When did you get to know the ESG (year)?

Please type the answer:

---

##### 4. What was happening then as far as QA is concerned?

Please type the answer:

---

##### 5. Are you redesigning your internal QA?

Please type the answer:

---

##### 6. Are you checking your internal QA with the ESG?

Please type the answer:

---

---

**7. Are you having a new way of external QA and/or accreditation introduced (by national/regional authorities)?**

Please type the answer:

---

**II. Internal implementation of the ESG**

**1. Are your institutional arrangements for QA influenced by ESG? If yes, how?**

Please type the answer:

**2. Has the QA developed in your HEI since the publishing of the ESG, in 2005?**

Please type the answer:

**3. Does it comply with your institutional QA procedures? If so, how?**

Please type the answer:

**4. Give examples of how the ESG has influenced the development of QA at your institution**

Please type the answer:

**5. Has the ESG encouraged the development of an institutional responsibility for QA?**

Please type the answer:

**6. What do you understand by the principle that quality and QA belong first of all to the autonomy of the HEI and its autonomy?**

Please type the answer:

**7. Has your HEI grown more autonomous through external QA?**

Please type the answer:

**8. Are you missing some elements in the ESG relating to the internal QA?**

Please type the answer:

**9. Which other elements of internal QA would you recognise as important?**

- A) Internal audits?
- B) International dimension?
- C) Strategic check and help?
- D) Sectorial cooperation?
- E) Research?
- F) Other?

Please type the answer:

**10. How do you characterise the relation between your institutions and its external QA? Is this relation consistent with the ESG?**

Please type the answer:

**11. Which are the most useful elements of the ESG for your institution to enhance its internal quality?**

Please type the answer:

---

**III. External QA**

**1. Does your institution experience the external QA primarily through:**

- A) Programme accreditation?



B) Institutional evaluation?

C) Both?

Please type the answer:

---

**2. How do you characterise the relation between your institutions and its external QA?**

Please type the answer:

---

**3. Is this relation consistent with the ESG?**

Please type the answer:

---

**4. How do you look at external QA?**

A) As a partner?

B) As an antagonist?

Please type the answer:

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**5. How would you like to have external QA for your national system improved?**

A) Peers instead of experts reviewing or the other way around?

B) Same system for all HEI and both initial and cyclic assessment?

C) Connection with resources?

D) Difference or no difference between assessment and accreditation?

E) More international than national?

F) Also institutional management?

G) Also research?

H) Or research management?

I) link with automatic recognition?

J) More TQM?

Please type the answer:

---

**6. How do you look upon sectorial (field specific) QA for programme accreditation external QA?**

Please type the answer:

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**7. Are you missing some elements in the ESG relating to the external QA?**

Please type the answer:

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**8. Which of these elements would you mention in the revised ESG?**

Please type the answer:

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**IV. Revision of the ESG**

**1. It has been proposed to make changes to the ESG. In your opinion, what would be the pros and cons of any change**

Please type the answer:

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**2. How fundamental should the changes be?**

A) Should the structure into 3 parts be changed?

B) How should the relationship be between the standards and the guidelines?

C) Should the revised ESG stress the European dimension or characteristics or be rather global?

D) What are the specifically European or bologna characteristics of the revised ESG?

E) In which way should the revised ESG refer to ranking and/or mapping?

Please type the answer:

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**3. How should the ESG revision process be carried out?**

Please type the answer:

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**4. Timeline for the ESG revision process to be carried out?**

Please type the answer:

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