



european consortium for accreditation

ECA NEWSLETTER



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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Dear colleagues,

We are very happy to share with you this edition of the ECA Newsletter. It covers recent activities of the ECA and our members.

Recent months have been very intense for ECA. For the first time in our history we have gone through change in our Secretariat. For the first 15 years of the ECA existence the Secretariat has been hosted by NVAO. As of 1st of July, the Secretariat is hosted by ACSUCYL.

On behalf of all the ECA members and observers, I would like to express our gratefulness for the remarkable performance of NVAO and Mark Frederiks as Coordinator. It is also a great moment to wish good luck to ACSUCYL and Sandra Marcos Ortega, who became the new ECA Coordinator.

Apart from the significant internal changes, ECA has also been very active externally. We have become partners in the new Erasmus+ projects.

We are very much looking forward to contributing to their success and to new developments and values they will bring.

We are also continuing our training activities and carrying out our consortium's regular meetings. This issue of the newsletter includes the short information about the training event on assessing joint programmes, hosted by AQAS and ECA meeting in Stockholm hosted by UKÄ.

Finally, we have finalized development of ECA Barometer – our new initiative aimed to identify the future trends in higher education, which will have significant impact on the quality assurance landscape.

I would also like to wish you all a happy holidays and all the best in the New Year 2020. I hope that the new year will bring new and exciting developments for the ECA, our members and all of the quality assurance community.

Maciej Markowski
Chair of the Board of ECA



NEWS FROM ECA

New ECA Secretariat

By Mark Frederiks

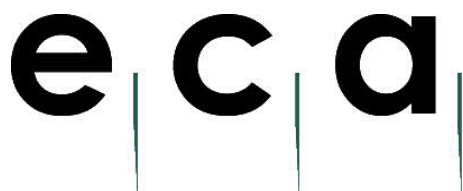
After having hosted the ECA Secretariat since the start of ECA in 2003 the NVAO informed the ECA members last year that it was time for another ECA member agency to take up this responsibility.

The General Meeting of ECA decided on 19 February 2019 that from 1st July 2019 the ECA Secretariat will be hosted by ACSUCYL with Sandra Marcos as Coordinator. Mark Frederiks and Monique Knoester from NVAO would like to express their gratitude to the ECA members, board, observers, experts, project partners and stakeholders for the many years of successful and pleasant cooperation. We wish ACSUCYL much success with providing the Secretariat as a valuable service to its members.

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"We thank NVAO for the great work done in the Secretariat during the past 15 years"

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Formalisation of the ECA Secretariat Agreement

By ECA Secretariat

Last October it has been formalized the agreement between ECA and ACSUCYL to assume the Secretariat of the Association. This agreement was signed by the Chair of the ECA Board, Maciej Markowski, and the director of ACSUCYL, José Ángel Domínguez. During the next two years ACSUCYL will assume this function with Sandra Marcos as coordinator.



ECA discussion paper on European Universities

By ECA Secretariat

ECA members' agencies have worked within the working group on "Innovation in QA and Accreditation" to draft the paper, that was adopted by the Board and ECA General Assembly.

The aim of the paper is to launch a discussion about QA in the framework of the European universities initiative.

The target is both policy and implementation-oriented and practical: raising awareness on the QA dimension among European member states, European institutions and policy makers is crucial. At the same time, institutions have primarily responsibility for Qa and will have to cope with this new context. ECA quality assurance agencies are ready to jointly contribute to the discussion on QA of European Universities.



For more info:

<http://ecahe.eu/assets/uploads/2019/07/ECA-Discussion-Paper-European-Universities-Initiative-considerations-regarding-quality-and-quality-assurance.pdf>



Involvement of ECA in new EU Projects

By ECA Secretariat

During the last months several EU projects in which ECA will be involved as project partner have been granted:

CALOHex "Measuring and Comparing Achievements of Learning Outcomes in Higher Education in Europe – Extension": the project aims to develop comparable Frameworks for five subject areas that were not cover in the project already implemented. These are: Business Administration, Information Engineering/ICT; International Relations; Medicine; Performing and Fine Arts.

QA Students: the project aims to provide students with sufficient knowledge and resources to ensure their position as equal partners in the institutions' evaluation.



SUCTI Academia: the aim of the project is to raise awareness and shift the internal culture of institutions towards internationalization, thus reating a systemic change in the institutions and in European Higher Education.

More info: <http://ecahe.eu/home/about/projects/>

Published the ECA Barometer 2019

By Maciej Markowski. Chair of the ECA Board

ECA Barometer is our new initiative aimed to spot the trends that will shape the future of the higher education and quality assurance landscape in the forthcoming years. It is a series of thoughts put together by the ECA members and observers in order to share our perspective of the future.

This year we have released the first edition and our desire is that it becomes a permanent ECA's activity from now on. François Pernot (HCERES) has coordinated and edited this year's issue and a great number of authors contributed to it. We would like to invite you to get acquainted with our perspective to the following topics:

- The Tumultuous Higher Education Landscape and the Response of Quality Assurance.

- LLL processes, flexible learning and digitalization
- Future skills and competencies
- Social Dimension of Higher Education
- European universities
- Quality Assurance of Research

The ECA Barometer aims to become beacon for quality assurance community and explore possible futures, without making any judgement or taking any particular stance. We truly hope that you will find it interesting.

The publication is freely available here:

<http://ecahe.eu/home/services/events/eca-barometer-2019/>



ECA MEETINGS AND TRAININGS

ECA Training “Assessing Joint Programmes” 2019 in Cologne

By Eva Fernández de Labastida

On the 10th and 11th of October 2019, AQAS hosted in Cologne an ECA training regarding the assessment of Joint Programmes. The training was facilitated by Ronny Heintze (AQAS), Eva Fernández de Labastida (Unibasq) and Patrick Heinzer (AQAS), as a junior trainer new to the team. Up to 17 participants coming from HEIs, QAAs and the EACEA, from nine countries attended the training focused on the European Approach whilst also paying attention to national systems that constitute the context in which QA decisions take place. This training aimed to prepare participants for external quality assurance of joint programmes, the use of audit techniques and the interpretation and substantiation of assessment criteria. The framework of the European Approach was used to highlight different interpretations of standards and underlying substantiations.



ECA Meetings 2019 in Stockholm

By ECA Secretariat

On the 3rd and 4th of October 2019, Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ) hosted the ECA General Meeting and Working Group Meetings. It gave members the opportunity to discuss about the EU projects that are currently being developed and plan the participation of ECA in new ones.

We have had also the opportunity to learn about the Swedish QA System, the changing landscape of the Higher Education System and their internationalization.



NEWS FROM ECA MEMBERS

Peer Learning Activity “Support LRC compliant recognition practices in HEIs”

By ECA (Working group 1, about mutual recognition and joint programmes) - ASHE, NAKVIS and Unibasq

This Peer Learning Activity (PLA) is part of the Erasmus+ Key Action 3 EHEA Reform project "I-Comply" coordinated by Nuffic, which is geared towards legal and practical implementation with the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) in the EHEA. Representatives of ECA working group I regarding Joint programmes and recognition (ASHE, NAKVIS and Unibasq) participated in the PLA which took place in Venice on the 26th of November, some of them as rapporteurs of the parallel sessions.

The objective of this PLA was to identify and design models of good practice to structurally support LRC compliant recognition practices in HEIs. Several examples were presented and discussed. The PLA was structured around two main questions:

How can ENIC-NARIC centres support HEI in their countries to practice recognition according to the LRC? and How can ENIC-NARICs (and possibly other national actors) support HEI in regards to: 1) turnaround time, 2) information provision and 3) the implementation of ESG 1.4?.

URL LINK: <https://www.nuffic.nl/en/subjects/i-comply-implementation-lrc-compliant-practices-ehea/>



MEHR – European Human Rights project completed

Written by UKÄ Swedish Higher Education Authority

UKÄ has for three years coordinated the European project Modernisation, Education, and Human Rights in Higher Education (MEHR). The project, which has now been completed, has aimed to develop the work on learning objectives on human rights in higher education.

The MEHR project has aimed at developing the work on human rights learning objectives in higher education both nationally and at European level. The project has been funded by the EU programme Erasmus+ and is a collaboration between quality assurance organisations and universities in Sweden, Croatia and Portugal, and the European Students' Union (ESU), umbrella organisation for Europe's national student associations. It is the first time UKÄ

has led an international project of this kind, and the collaboration between partner organisations from different countries and educational traditions has offered many thought-provoking experiences and insights.

Despite sometimes different starting points and despite the fact that higher education is organised in different ways in the participating countries, the partnership has been characterised by a desire for mutual understanding and a strong commitment to the importance of quality assurance of learning objectives in education on human rights, says Ulf Hedbjörk, who together with Kristina Tegler Jerselius coordinated the project. Students must have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills required in working life, and develop a readiness to intervene professionally when human rights are violated.



Second seminar in cycle on internationalization of higher education: "European Universities and development of joint studies"

Written by Agency for Science and Higher Education

As part of the cycle of seminars on internationalization of higher education, the Agency for Science and Higher Education organized a seminar titled "European Universities and Development of Joint Studies" that was held on 30 October 2019 in Zagreb.

As the European Universities Initiative was designed to enhance student and staff mobility, as well as the quality, competitiveness and attractiveness of the European higher education by fostering cooperation between European HEIs,

Participants also had the opportunity to hear different experiences related to development of

joint studies and attracting foreign students from the University of Dubrovnik, University of Zadar Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Zagreb, and the Zagreb School of Economics and Management.

The cycle of seminars on internationalization was launched in response to the results of the re-accreditation process, which indicated a great potential and strength of Croatian higher education institutions with regard to offering study programmes in the global market and attracting international students.





MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Thank you for sharing another year with us. For a New Year 2020 full of prosperity and thousands of projects and illusions together.

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