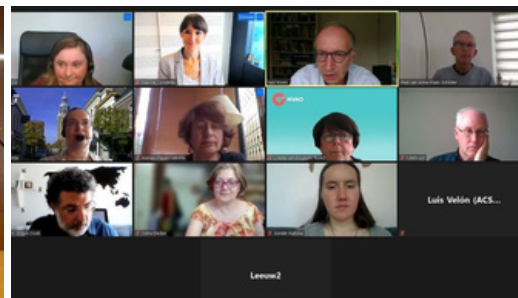




The European Consortium for  
Accreditation in Higher Education

# ECA NEWSLETTER



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## ECA EDITORIAL:

Dear members and observers,

Since the election of the new board in June 2021 and our appointment as Chair and Vice-Chair, together with all the Board members, we have been reshaping ECA's activities to meet the challenges ahead.

One of the actions that have been developed is the renewal of the website to transmit all the necessary information in the most accessible way possible. Another issue we have been reflecting on is the need to adapt the working groups to the current needs of ECA and its members. This way in our last meeting we decided to merge working groups I and II into a single working group on joint programmes, recognition and innovation which will cover issues related to joint programmes such as the European Approach or European degrees within the European Universities initiative, as well as aspects related to the recognition of these programmes and any other issues related to the quality of higher education with a focus on innovation.

It will be a space for reflection and debate in which to share both the needs and expectations of the agencies and the solutions and good practices that are being developed.

As already mentioned, the expectations and needs of the members are the starting point of any new activity to be developed using all the communication tools at our disposal.

In the future, and especially for 2022, we plan to continue the work already started by keeping the original essence of ECA, but with a touch of modernity. With a strong focus on Joint programs but above all on the European commitment to facilitate cooperation between key players, we hope to strengthen the links between ECA and its members.



Solange Pisarz  
ECA Chair



Eva Fernández de Labastida  
ECA Vice-Chair

# NEWS FROM ECA

## Presenting ECA Activity Plan 2022

By ECA

Empowered by the vision to act as an internationally acknowledged driver of innovation in accreditation and quality assurance in higher education, ECA will put a special focus on **joint programmes and European approach in 2022**. The Association will strive to keep the essence of tradition with a modern touch in close cooperation with a strong alliance of **16 members and 3 observers**.

The following **activities will take place in 2022**:

### GENERAL MEETINGS AND SEMINARS

**Annual General Meeting** will take place in June 2022 and will be combined with a seminar, followed by a December 2022 Winter Seminar.

**Members and observers are kindly invited to express their interest in hosting the June event.** Please contact the Secretariat in case of interest or should you have any questions in this regard: [secretariat@ecahe.eu](mailto:secretariat@ecahe.eu). The format of the Winter Seminar will depend on the covid-19 situation.

### WORKING GROUPS

**Joint programmes, recognition and innovation**

As of December 2021, **WG 1 and WG 2 are joint into a new WG on Joint programmes, recognition, and innovation**, chaired by **Eva Fernandez de Labastida from UNIBASQ**. This WG will be mainly focusing on joint programmes and European approach and as a response to a rising demand in this area. The European Universities initiative and their innovative approaches in terms of programmes, including the perspective of a European degree is increasing the interest on the quality assurance of joint programmes following the European Approach and the need of recognition of these new degrees. In addition, any topic of interest of the members will be discussed in this forum.

Members of WG will meet at least three times in 2022, namely in **April 2022, June 2022, and December 2022**.

### Certification Group

The **Certification group**, chaired by **Ronny Heintze from AQAS**, continues unchanged and will meet three times in 2022, namely in **March 2022, June 2022, and December 2022**.

### TRAININGS

Considering the growing demand for European Approach, also a result of expandable growth of European Universities in the future, **two trainings will be organised in 2022, namely:**

- **21-22 April 2022**
- **29-30 June 2022**

The registration process, as well as programme and location details will follow soon.

### WEBINARS

In addition to seminars, **two webinars** will take place in 2022, covering topics of strategic interest for members and observers.

### STRATEGIC PROJECTS

In **March 2022, ECA will re-open a call for strategic projects proposals** in line with the ECA strategy. With this call ECA continues to support the development of projects by its members with the aim of contributing to the strategy of the association and to promote the goals related to higher education quality assurance. The Board agreed on increasing funds for strategic projects to foster mutual collaboration among ECA members.

### EU PROJECTS

With its European dimension and a strong pool of experts ECA continues participating in EU funded projects. Should there appear the opportunity for ECA participation, please contact the Secretariat.

### CeQuInt CERTIFICATE

The importance and recognition of the CeQuInt certificate grows each year and in 2022 ECA will continue with its activities of promoting and awarding the Certificate.



# SAVE THE DATES

Join ECA events in 2022



## MARCH

- **10 March 2022**  
Certificaton Group Meeting
- **End of March**  
Call for Strategic Projects

## APRIL

- Joint programmes, recognition, and innovation Working Group Meeting.
- **21-22 April**  
Training: European Approach

## JUNE

- **General Meeting** and Seminar, combined with WG Meetings
- **29-30 June**  
Training: European Approach

## DECEMBER

- **Winter Seminar**, combined with WG Meetings

## Become an active member of the ECA community

**Working groups** welcome new members. Please contact the Secretariat for further details: [secretariat@ecahe.eu](mailto:secretariat@ecahe.eu).



## Take a quick survey on topics of high interest in 2022

ECA Board members have discussed the topics of high interest for association's members and observers.

You are cordially invited to take a **one-minute, anonymous survey and express your opinion**. The survey will be available until **28 February 2022 on [THIS LINK](#)**.

# ECA Winter Seminar and Joint Working Groups Meeting

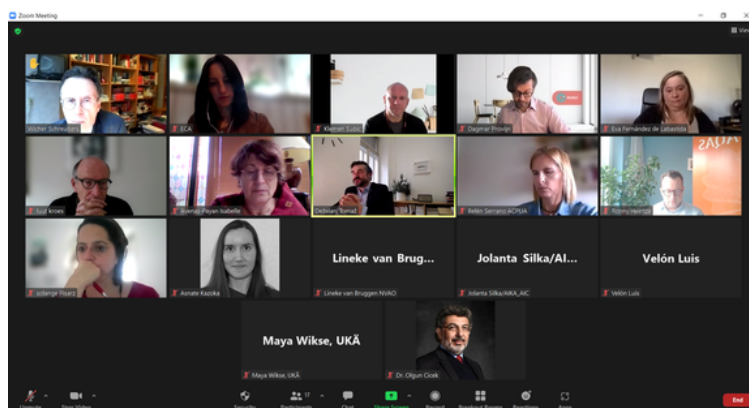
By ECA

ECA winter seminar took place online on **13th of December 2021**.

In addition to joint WG meeting, where ECA Activity Plan for 2022 was discussed, the seminar put focus on the **European Framework for Quality Assurance of European Universities**, in particular, the applicability of the framework in practice, the results of the **EUniQ project** and the experience of **European universities Alliance**.

The following speakers participated at the event:

- **Dagmar Provijn, NVAO**, with the lecture Developing an European Approach for Comprehensive QA of (European) University Networks (EUniQ), dissemination and output of the project.
- **prof. Tomaž Deželan, University of Ljubljana, EUTOPIA Alliance**, with the lecture EUniQ pilot evaluations: perspectives and feedback.



## CALOHEE Extension Project

By ECA

ECA is part of the **Advisory Board** of the **CALOHEE Extension project** which builds on the experience and outcomes of the TUNING – CALOHEE (Measuring and Comparing Achievements of Learning Outcomes in Higher Education in Europe) Project.

The project outcomes intend to strengthen the position of the European and national higher education sector and the degree programmes offered, by evidencing what is actually learned. This involves the development of Subject Area based Qualifications Reference Frameworks (Bachelor and Master) for the wider public and all stakeholders and more detailed Assessment Reference Frameworks for specialists in the field. Both frameworks contribute to the enhancement and fairness of external and internal quality assurance mechanisms.

The project CALOHEE Extension focusses on **5 main subject areas**:

- Business Administration
- Information Engineering/ICT
- International Relations
- Medicine and
- Performing and Fine Arts.

For each subject area, a working group is created, made up of fourteen senior staff/ academics and one student.



## Updates in the Qual-AI-ty Engagement project

By ECA

**Fostering Student Engagement through Qualitative Quality Assurance Practices** (Qual-AI-ty Engagement) is an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships project lead by Riga Technical University and co-lead by ACEEU. Other partners include the University of Twente, the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology and the European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education.

As a part of the initial phase, the project has already identified good practices applied in Europe regarding the student (and other stakeholders) engagement.

Currently, an important stage of the project is being developed: The Qual-AI-ty Bootcamp. The development of the Bootcamp should allow quality assurance staff from different countries to exchange knowledge and share experience.

This will be the basis for promoting student engagement with society proactively and contribute to the convergence of policy and practice in quality assurance in the EU. Additionally, the Bootcamp will allow to envision effective instruments for assessing student engagement with society and a comprehensive Qual-AI-ty Assessment Model to drive the student engagement.

Taking advantage of the digital opportunities, the Bootcamp is going to be organised in an online format, divided in two different sessions:

- 8 February 2021: **Focused activity for the quality assurance staff from the consortium.**
- 8 March 2022: **A second one opened to diverse stakeholders.**

This will allow the project to develop the tools and further validate them with a more diverse community of stakeholders.

Further information can be consulted in the project website and the LinkedIn account.

Should you want to get in touch or get involved, send us an email on: contact@qual-ai-ty.eu



## Systemic university change towards internationalisation for academia (SUCTIA) project

By ECA

ECA is a partner of the SUCTIA project aiming to raise awareness and shift the internal culture of HEIs towards internationalisation, creating a systemic change in HEIs and in the European Higher Education Area. SUCTIA Academia is built on SUCTIA project (2016-2019) which already shown that systemic change through trainings for administrative staff is a key to success. Shifting a culture is only possible through internationalising all groups of higher education institutions. The European report on systemic university changes towards internationalisation for academic staff in European Higher Education Institutions and the SUCTIA Manual are available on the project website.

During 2021, the Train the trainers modules were implemented with some online sessions and the last one in a hybrid format. Now it is time for the in-house trainings at each of the participating HEIs, while the outcomes will be presented at the final conference of the project which is due in June 2022.



# NEWS FROM ECA MEMBERS

## Heading towards new challenges

Letter from Solange Pisarz, ECA Chair

Dear ECA members and observers,  
dear colleagues,

"The only constant in life is change."

This is the sentence that was chosen by our team last winter to introduce ECA greetings.

Today, it sounds to me even stronger ... as I am professionally taking a new route for 2022. I am leaving Hcéres ... and I am very glad to join Cti as Deputy executive director. As you all know, this new starting route is also leading to Quality assurance, and I'll stay in the business with you! The expertise and partnerships built at Hcéres, but also built with you within ECA will be no doubt a chance for my new position at Cti.

As far as ECA is concerned, continuity is granted: I will be able to keep my mandate as Chair of ECA, but it also demonstrates the commitment of Cti to the ECA and to its members. Change but continuity, tradition and innovation ... these will be some of our key words for ECA 2022.

For this New Year, let me wish you all the best for you and your loved ones. May 2022 reinforce our links and cooperation!



## The Latvian Quality Agency for Higher Education (AIKA) presents analysis on organisation of the site visits in online mode

By Quality Agency for Higher Education (AIKA)

In December 2021 AIKA published **analysis on the site visits organised from March 2020 until December 2021**. Majority of these site visits took place in a semi-online format with some experts participating on-site and some experts online.

The analysis was based on the feedback received from the higher education institutions reviewed and the review experts. The analysis covers 79 assessments for licensing of study programmes and 69 assessments for accreditation of study fields (study programme groups).

The analysis looks at the national restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, related changes to AIKA assessment methodologies and provides statistics on the site visits conducted in this period.

Further, the analysis focuses on three specific topics – general provision of online visits, assessment of the resources and provision of higher education institutions in online mode and ensuring the quality of online visits from the perspective of all involved parties.

Overall, the feedback has been positive. However, a number of shortcomings and suggestions for improvement have been identified, especially from the perspective of review experts.

For more information please visit [THIS LINK](#).



# NEWS FROM ECA MEMBERS

## SQAA issued an open call for international experts

By The Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency (SQAA)

The Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency (SQAA / NAKVIS) is issuing an open call for international experts who would be interested in participating in SQAA procedures. Selected experts will be added to the SQAA database for international experts. The call is open to university teaching staff with experience in quality assurance in higher education. Experts from all areas of expertise / scientific disciplines are welcome, but there is an increased need for experts from the areas of:

- 02 – Arts and humanities
- 05 – Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics
- 07 – Engineering, manufacturing and construction
- 08 – Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary
- 09 – Health and welfare

The application deadline is set for **28 February 2022**.

The candidates should **submit their resumes (CV)** to the following email address:  
filip.drazenovic@nakvis.si.

For further questions regarding the public call, please use the same contact address.

All the important information can be found in [the full call for experts](#).

## External Centred QA of Learning (SCL): reaching a common understanding project

by Agency for the Quality of the Basque University System, Unibasq

Unibasq was granted an ECA strategic project to agree on recommendations for external quality assurance of student centred-learning (SCL).

There is a lack of a common approach about the concept of SCL and for Quality Assurance Agencies, it is still a challenge how to address it. Therefore, the main objective of this proposal is to provide a common understanding of what SCL can be and to give recommendations on how to address it. The expected impact will be to find a common understanding based on the current practices and to see how to address SCL in the external QA procedures considering the different ways HEIs can approach SCL.

The benefits will be that it will be easier to address SCL and to promote good practices when detected by the external QA procedures, which will benefit HEIs and students, and will also help QA agencies when dealing with their own reviews against the ESG.

