The role of external stakeholders in Croatian higher education

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(2005) objective:

’A quality assurance system will be introduced into the higher education system of the Republic of Croatia by 2006.’
Data on structure and effectiveness of QA systems at public and private HEIs:

- 150 established QA units at higher education institutions (at fully integrated universities, departments and libraries included)
- 108 students involved in the work of QA units
- 35 representatives of external stakeholders involved in the work of QA units.
External stakeholders are also represented in HEIs governance structures (Boards, Councils)

External stakeholders include representatives of:

- business and industry
- bodies of local and national government
- civil organisations
- alumni.
ASHE QA audit

• National Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (2009)
  → ASHE carries out the procedure of QA audit - assessing the degree of development and efficiency of internal quality assurance system of HEIs.

• 20 audits carried out from 2010 - 2012 (faculties, academies, polytechnics, colleges, universities) – with 20 audit reports.
Audit is carried out by a 5-member expert panel – 1 panel member is always a representative of business sector/industry.

Panels are selected from the ASHE Database of Audit Experts.

17 audit experts from business sector/industry trained by ASHE in the Database (domestic and foreign).
External stakeholders are seldom included in QA units (35/150) and mainly in following activities:

- designing curriculum or revisions of study programmes
- monitoring study programmes
- quality of students’ internship
- transfer of good practice from the economic sector to HE
- advisory role with impact on HEIs management.
Cooperation with business sector/industry:

- projects
- science and technology parks – transfer of knowledge
- teaching (external associates)
- organising student internships
- scholarships.
3 Career Centres/Offices (out of 20 audited institutions)

Individual cases of HEIs surveying employers on the quality of their students.
Initiatives for improving links between higher education and labour market:

- creating national information system that would contain data on the employment of graduates
- collecting data on employment of students (during 1st, 3rd and 5th year after graduation)
- analyses for individual study programmes, helping HEIs to respond to demands of labour market
- publishing of collected data - providing accurate information to prospective students.
Goals

Supporting evaluations (external & internal)

Informing prospective students, parents, HEIs

Development of HEIs

Benefit of higher education, creating policy initiatives

Collected data
Conclusions:

Improving quality is possible only with:

- active participation of all stakeholders which leads to transformation of HE
- developing general awareness of the importance of systematic quality assurance in HE
- development of quality culture
- transparency.
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