

# RE-ACCREDITATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN CROATIA

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agency for science and higher education croatia

ENQA

eqar

# Overview



- The context of Higher Education & Science in Croatia
- ASHE
- Re-accreditation
- Challenges





AUSTRIA

HUNGARY

SLOVENIA

Zagreb

Samobor

Velika Gorica

Varaždin

Koprivnica

Bjelovar

Karlovac

Sisak

Osijek

Vukovar

Vinkovci

Slavonski Brod

Rijeka

Pula

Zadar

Šibenik

Kaštela

Split

Dubrovnik

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

SERBIA

MONTENEGRO

ITALY

50 km

30 mi

# The Context of Higher Education & Science



## The main stakeholders:

- MSES - Ministry of Science, Education and Sports
- NCHE - National Council for Higher Education
- NCS - National Council for Science
- ASHE - Agency for Science and Higher Education
- SU - Students' Union
- Rectors' Conference
- The Croatian Council of Universities and University Colleges of Applied Sciences
- HEIs
- Scientific organizations

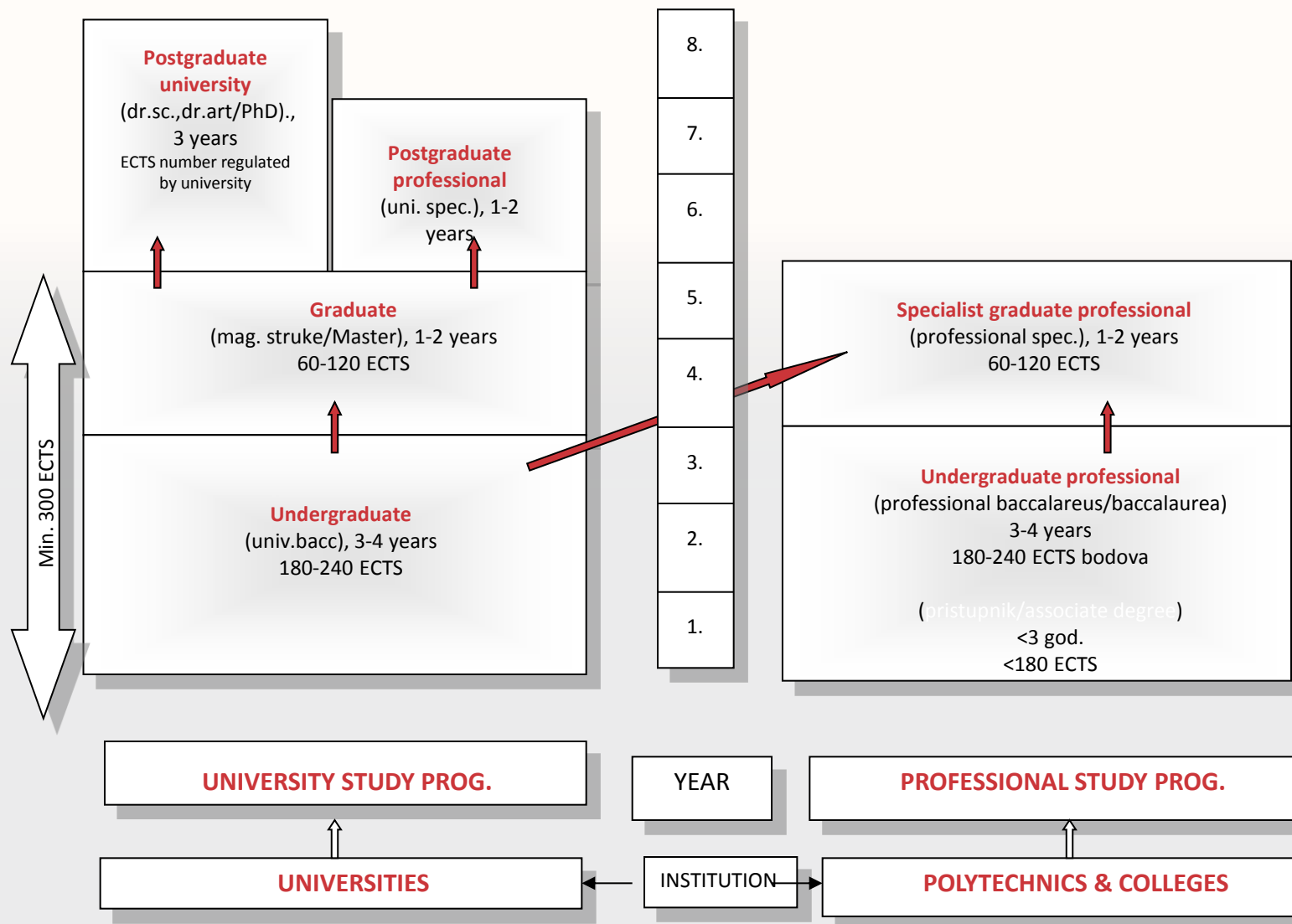


# The Context of Higher Education & Science



- Number of HEIs:
  - 119 (88 public / 31 private)
  - 10 universities (7 public / 3 private)
  - 15 polytechnics / 27 colleges
- Number of students: approx. 180 000
- Number of scientific organizations: 168  
(25 public scientific institutes)

# Scheme of study programmes in Croatia

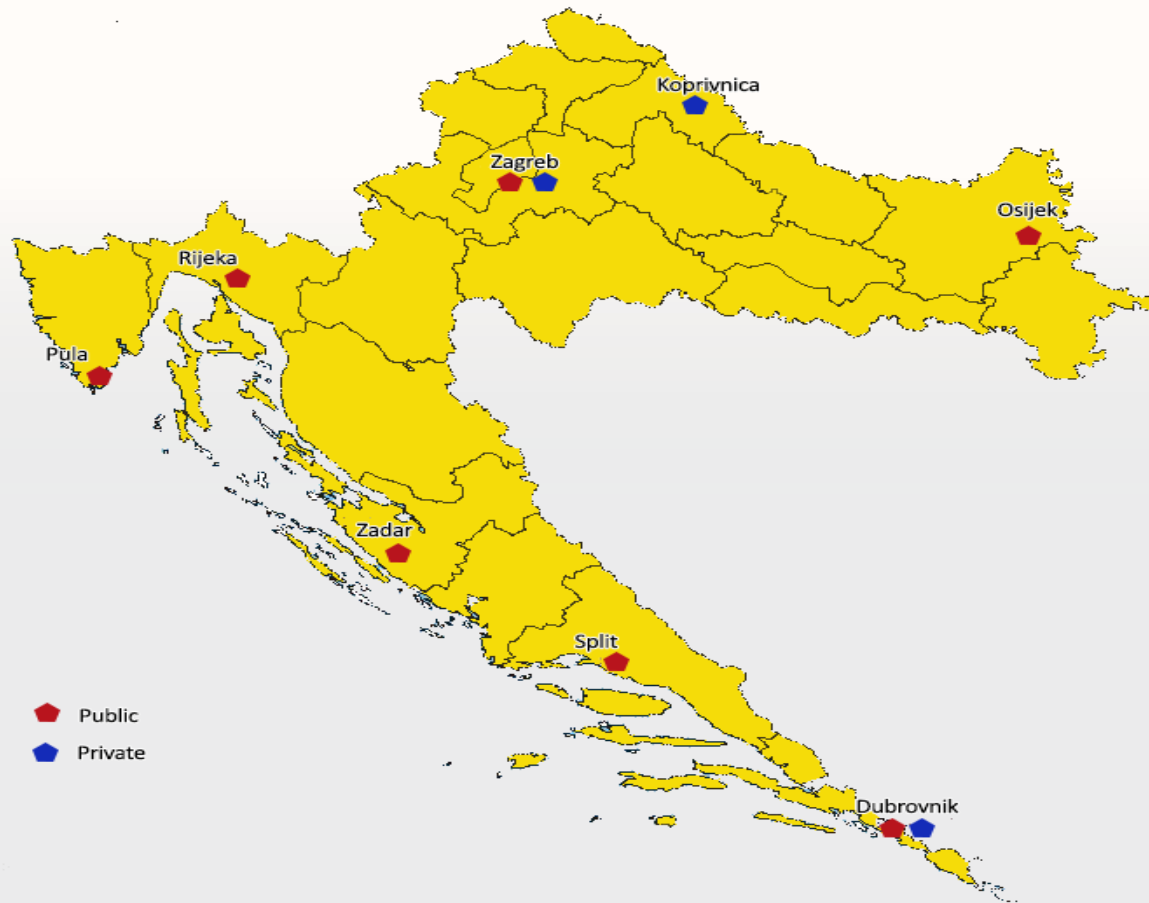


# Croatian Qualification Framework



Levels		Types of programs	
8	8.2.	Postgraduate university study – PhD	
	8.1.	Former Master's Degree – 2 years	
7		Postgraduate professional study	
		Graduate university study	Graduate professional study
6		Undergraduate university study	Undergraduate professional study
5		Professional study – less than 3 years Training programs – training and additional education	
4	4.2.	Secondary education – 4 years + State Matura	
	4.1.	Secondary education – 3 years + final exam	
3		Secondary vocational education – 1-2 years	
2		Vocational training	
1		Primary school (8 years)	

# Universities - 10

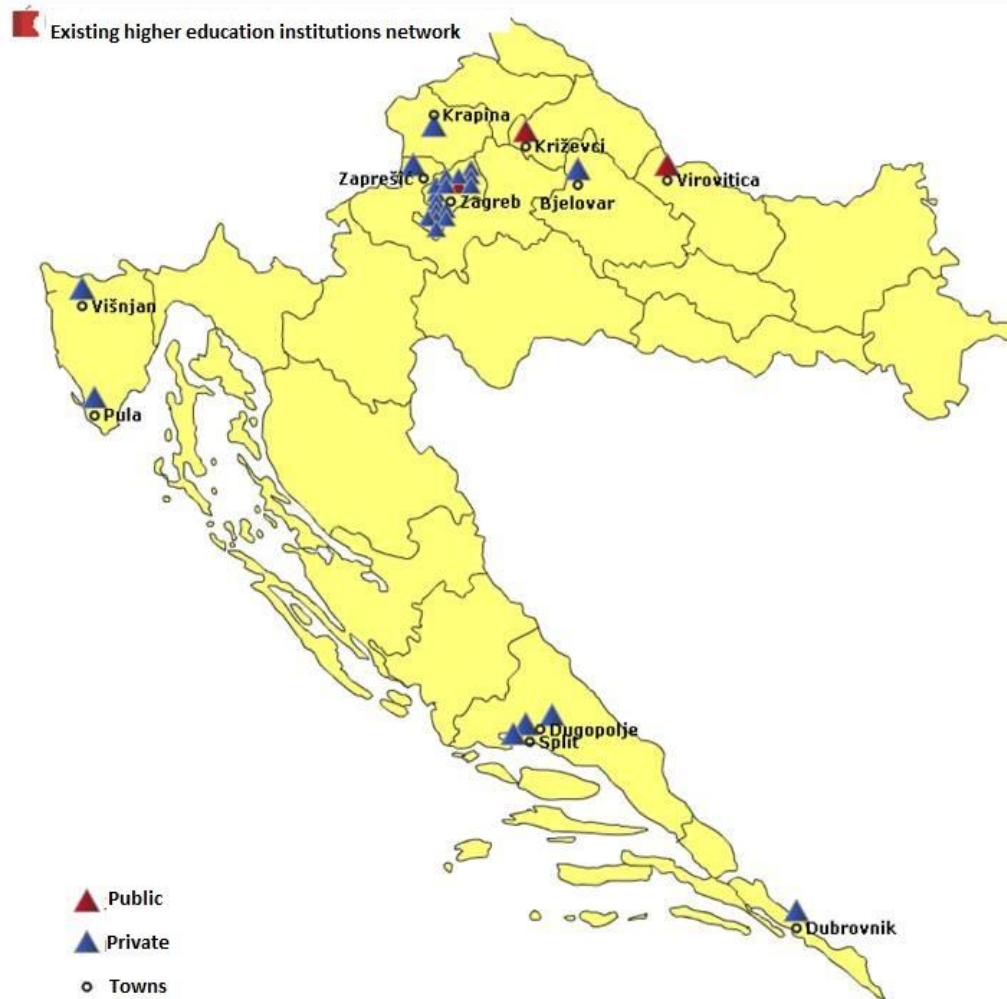




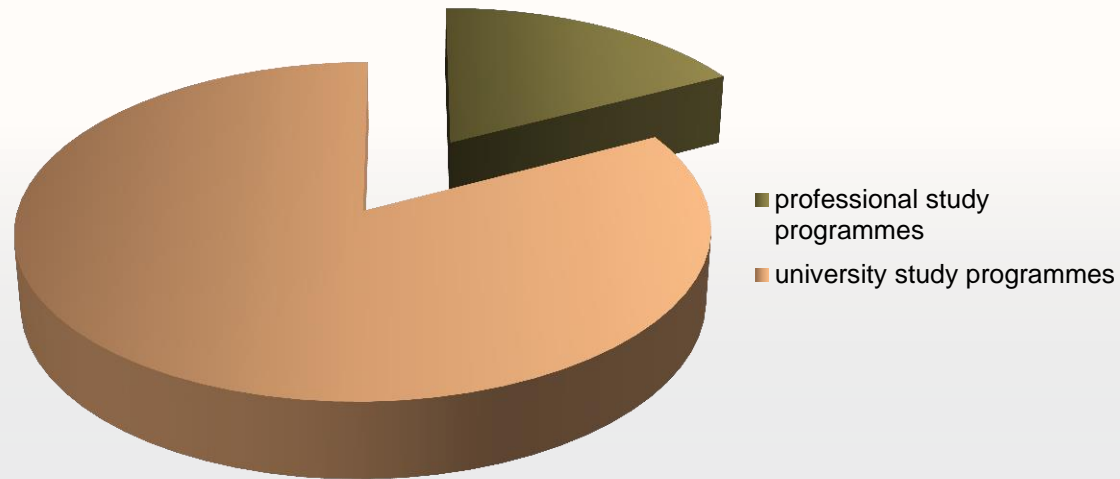
# Polytechnics - 15



# Colleges - 25

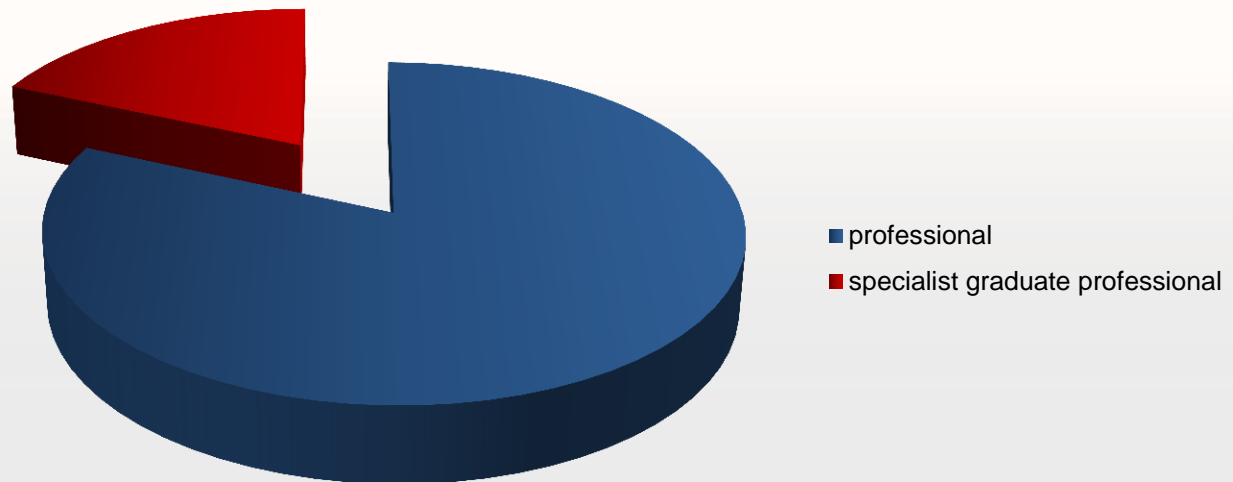


# Type of study programmes



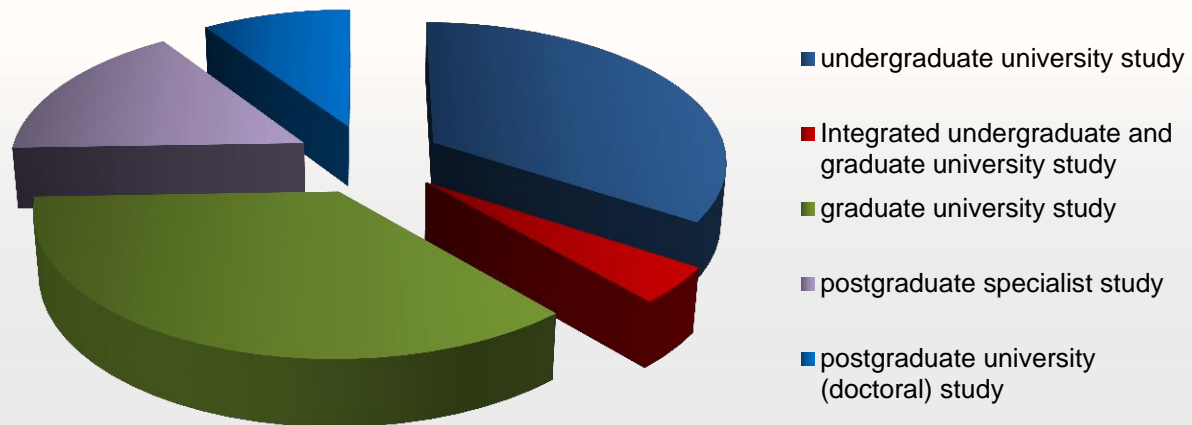
Type of study programmes	
Professional study programmes	215
University study programmes	1122

# Professional study programmes



Professional study programmes	
Professional	158
Specialist graduate professional	57
Total	215

# University study programmes



University study programmes	
Undergraduate university study	364
Integrated undergraduate and graduate uni	40
Graduate university study	387
Postgraduate specialist study	208
Postgraduate university (doctoral) study	123
Total	1122

# The beginnings – 1990s



- HE system inherited from Yugoslavia
- First legislative changes in 1993 – establishment of private HEIs enabled
- National Councils (Science and HE) set up – strategic and external QA role



# Introduction of Bologna system in Croatia



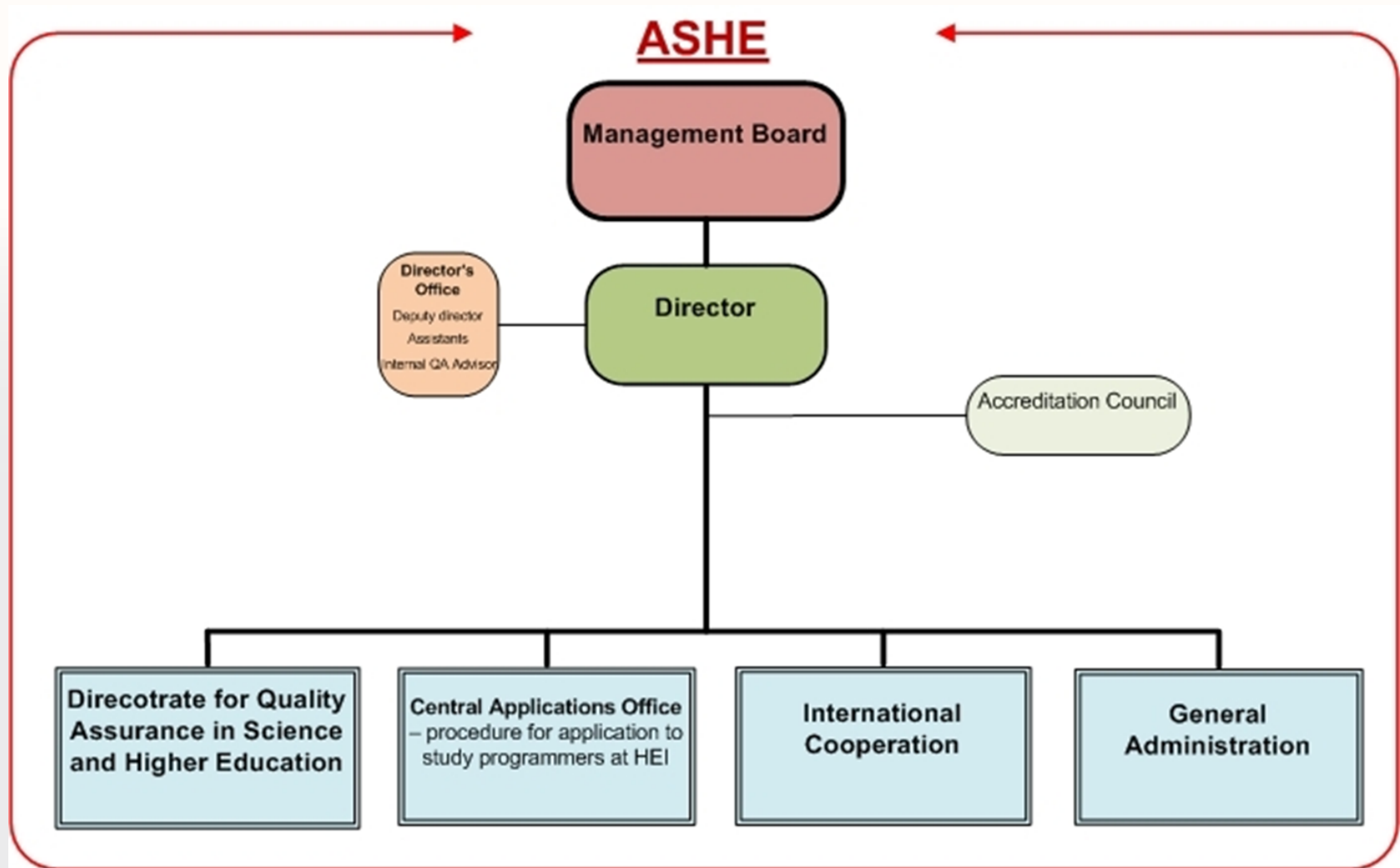
- 2001 Croatia signed the Bologna Declaration
- Impetus - wish to improve the education structure of the population, reform the system, and join the EU
- Major changes: binary system, three cycle system, ECTS
- National Councils tasked with external QA
- 2005 – first Bologna generation of students enrolled



- Established in 2005
- 2009 – redefinition of its role (Quality Assurance Act) and strengthening of its independence
- Is a legal entity that autonomously and independently performs activities defined by Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act, Act on Recognition of Foreign Educational Qualifications and Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education
- Unifies various activities related to the science and higher education system



# Organizational structure



# Activities



1. Quality Assurance Role
2. Collecting and analysing data on the systems of science and higher education
3. National ENIC/NARIC office
4. Central Applications Office
5. Support to work of various bodies
6. International cooperation



# QA role



Initial accreditation

Re-accreditation

Thematic evaluation

Audit



# Initial accreditation



- New HEIs and/or new study programs
- New scientific organizations established and/or financed by state
- Fulfilment of **minimum criteria** is checked

# Re-accreditation



- 5–year cycles
- All public and private HEIs by 2015/2016
- All scientific organizations established and/or financed by the state by 2015/2016

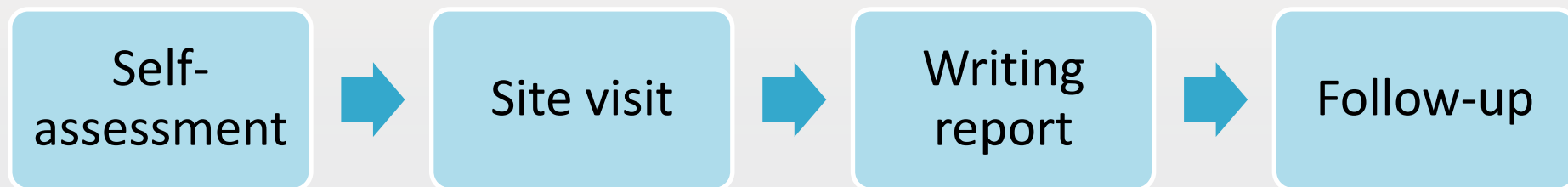
# Re-accreditation of HEIs



## All HEIs by 2015/2016

- 2010/2011: re-accreditation of **20** HEIs in the field of economics and business
- 2011/2012: re-accreditation of **32** HEIs in the technical sciences
- 2012/2013: re-accreditation of **9** HEIs in the biotechnical sciences + 14 private HEIs

# PROCEDURE



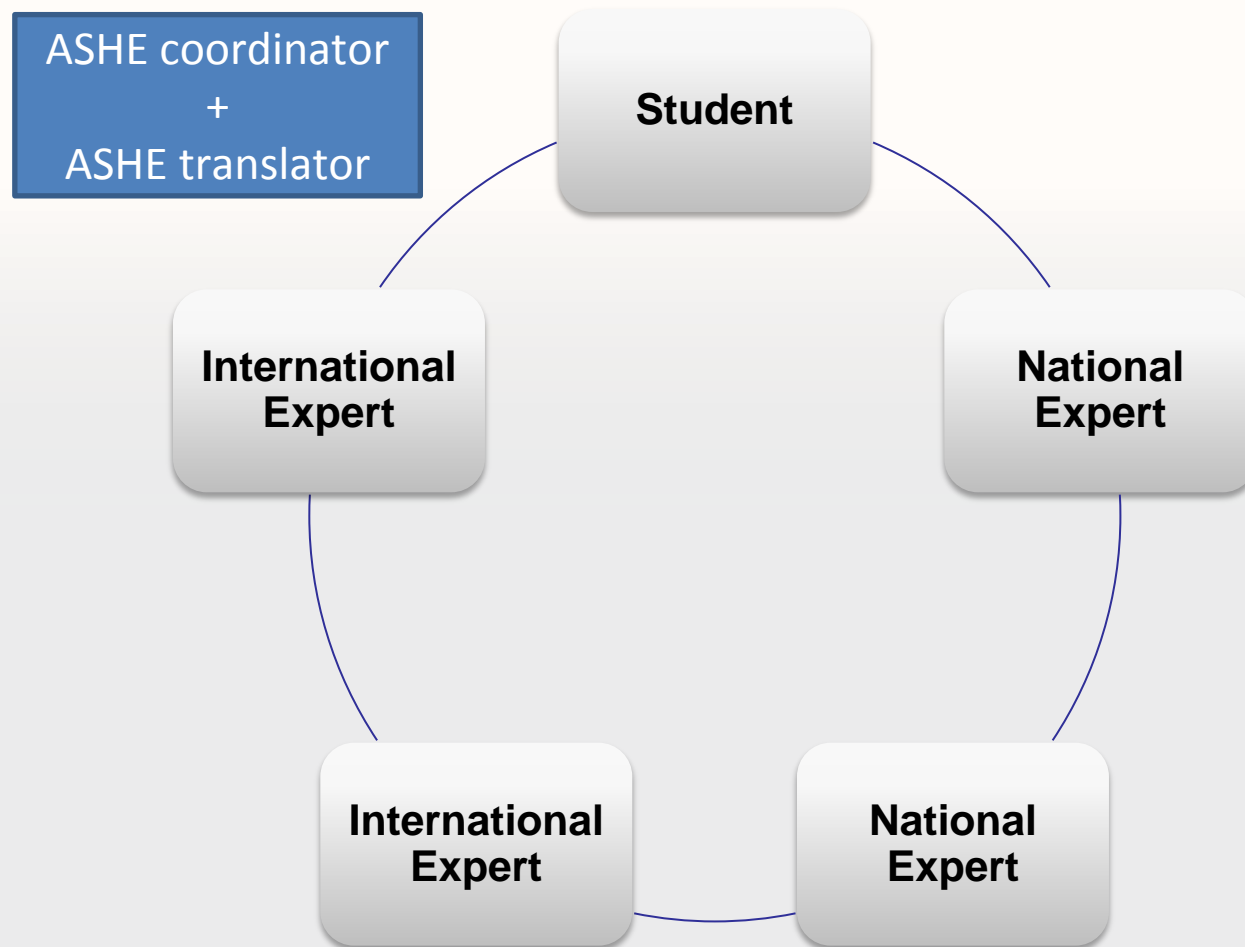
# Re-accreditation



- ✓ Periodic external review
- ✓ Standards and criteria (key areas)
- ✓ Accreditation Commissions/Councils
- ✓ Self-review
- ✓ Trainings
- ✓ Peer-reviews
- ✓ Site-visit
- ✓ Report
- ✓ Follow-up
- ✓ Accreditation decision
- ✓ Outcome of accreditation



# Re-accreditation - Expert Panel



# Re-accreditation - Scope



# MINIMUM CRITERIA



- Prescribed by Ordinance of Accreditation of HE
- **teacher/student ratio** 1:30
- **space** criteria 1 student per 1,25 m<sup>2</sup>
- 50/33 percent of study programmes conducted by **teachers employed** at the institution/own teachers

# MINIMUM CRITERIA



## For HE institutions registered in the Register of Scientific Organizations

- Adopted long-term **strategic programme of research** in the area in which the teaching activity is performed
- Adequate **number and qualifications of employed researchers** (appointed into scientific position or with an adequate number of scientific papers published)
- Proof of adequate **facilities** and **equipment** for proposed research
- Proof of necessary **funds** secured for proposed research

# QUALITY GRADE

**Standards and criteria of quality defined by  
Accreditation Council of the Agency**

**1**

**INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE**

**2**

**STUDY PROGRAMMES**

**3**

**STUDENTS**

**4**

**TEACHERS**

**5**

**RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY**

**6**

**INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND MOBILITY**

**7**

**RESOURCES: ADMINISTRATION, SPEACE, EQUIPMENT AND  
FINANCES**

# QUALITY GRADE



- Each standard consists of various criteria
- Fulfilment of each criterium must be described with following levels of implementation:
  - Not implemented
  - Starting phase of implementation
  - Partly implemented
  - Mostly implemented
  - Fully implemented

# CRITERIA/MEETINGS



- Meetings are organized with:

1

**Management**

2

**Meeting with the working group that compiled the Self-Evaluation**

3

**Meeting with representatives of the QA Unit**

4

**Teachers**

5

**Students**

6

**Non-teaching staff – tour of the facilities, etc.**



# 1. Institutional Management and Quality Assurance



## Focus markers:

- Mission
- Vision
- Systematic strategic planning
- Organizational structure
- Quality policy and procedures for quality assurance
- Mechanisms for monitoring and improving teaching and research quality
- Ethical behaviour

➤ Questions addressed to: management, QA department etc.



# 1. Institutional Management and Quality Assurance



- **1.5. The institution has a quality policy and connected procedures for quality assurance and enhancement of all its activities.**
- Quality assurance unit – is it only formal?

# Internal Audit



- **Scope** → degree of development and efficiency of the internal QA system of HEIs
- ESG standards part I
- Integrated QA system (ISO+ESG)

# HEIs QA systems



- 150 QA units are established at HEIs
- 126 QA Ordinances
- 57 QA Manuals
- 108 students members of QA units
- 35 representatives from business sector are members of QA units
- Enhancement of quality culture

## **ACT**

How do you change  
to improve?

## **PLAN**

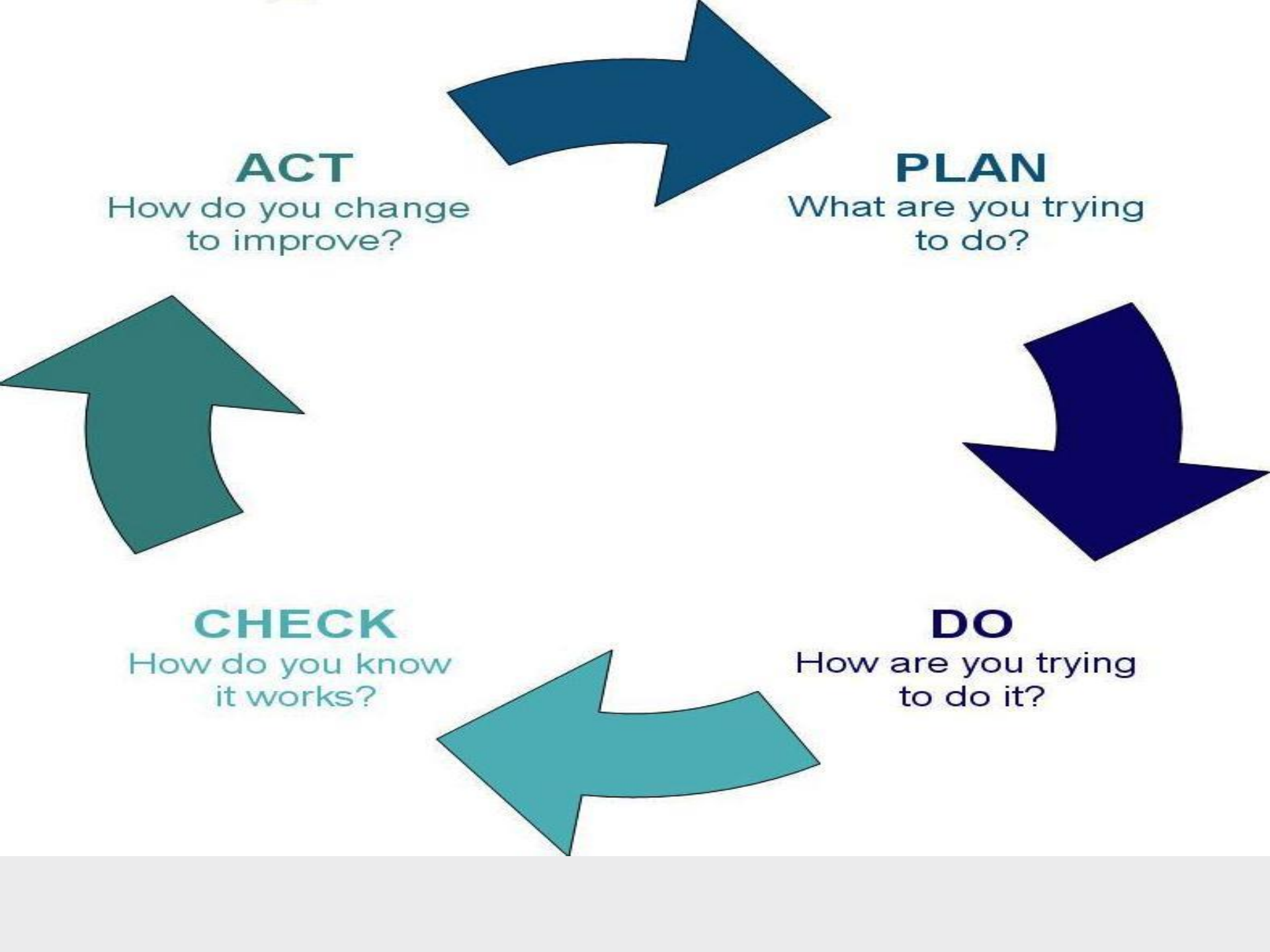
What are you trying  
to do?

## **DO**

How are you trying  
to do it?

## **CHECK**

How do you know  
it works?



# Role of Students in QA system



- Internal QA system at HEIs:
  - Part of governance body at HEI (Senate, Faculty board, SU, ...)
  - Part of advisory body (QA Council, Board, Centre)
  - Participate in evaluation of QA system/procedures at
    - Institutional level
    - Programme level

# Role of Students in QA system



- External QA system
  - Part of ASHE Accreditation Council
  - Part of experts panel (re-accreditation panel, audit panel)

## 2. Study programmes



### Focus markers:

- Enrolment quotas – pass rate
  - Learning outcomes and assessment
  - Allocation of ECTS credits
  - Proposing new study programmes and revision of the existing study programmes
  - Teaching methods
  - Internship
- Questions addressed to: management, heads of departments, teachers, QA department, working group that compiled the self-evaluation etc.

### 3. Students



#### Focus markers:

- Admission criteria
- Mentorship
- Assessment
- Alumni – track of the employability
- Informing the public
- Participation in decision-making processes and feedback about the measures implemented on the basis of their suggestions

➤ Questions addressed to: students, teachers, management etc.



## 4. Teachers



### Focus markers:

- Number and qualifications of teachers
- Encouraging development of teachers
- Teaching workload

➤ Questions addressed to: teachers, management etc.

## 5. Professional and Research Activity



### Focus markers:

- Priorities and procedures for expert and research activities
  - Cooperation with industry, businesses, S&ME
  - Advisory and professional activities
- Questions addressed to: teachers-researchers, assistants, management etc.

## 6. Mobility and International Cooperation



### Focus markers:

- Mobility of students
  - Mobility of teachers/researchers
  - International networks, projects and cooperation
- Questions addressed to: management, students, teachers/researchers, representatives of international cooperation office, etc.

## 7. Resources



### Focus markers:

- Resources: equipment, classrooms, laboratories etc.
  - Development of non-teaching staff
  - Equipment - in accordance with recognized international standards
  - Library, e-resources
  - Financial stability and transparency
- Questions addressed to: management, non-teaching staff, etc.
- Tour of facilities

# REPORTS



Report on  
meeting  
minimum  
quantitative  
criteria  
(MOZVAG)



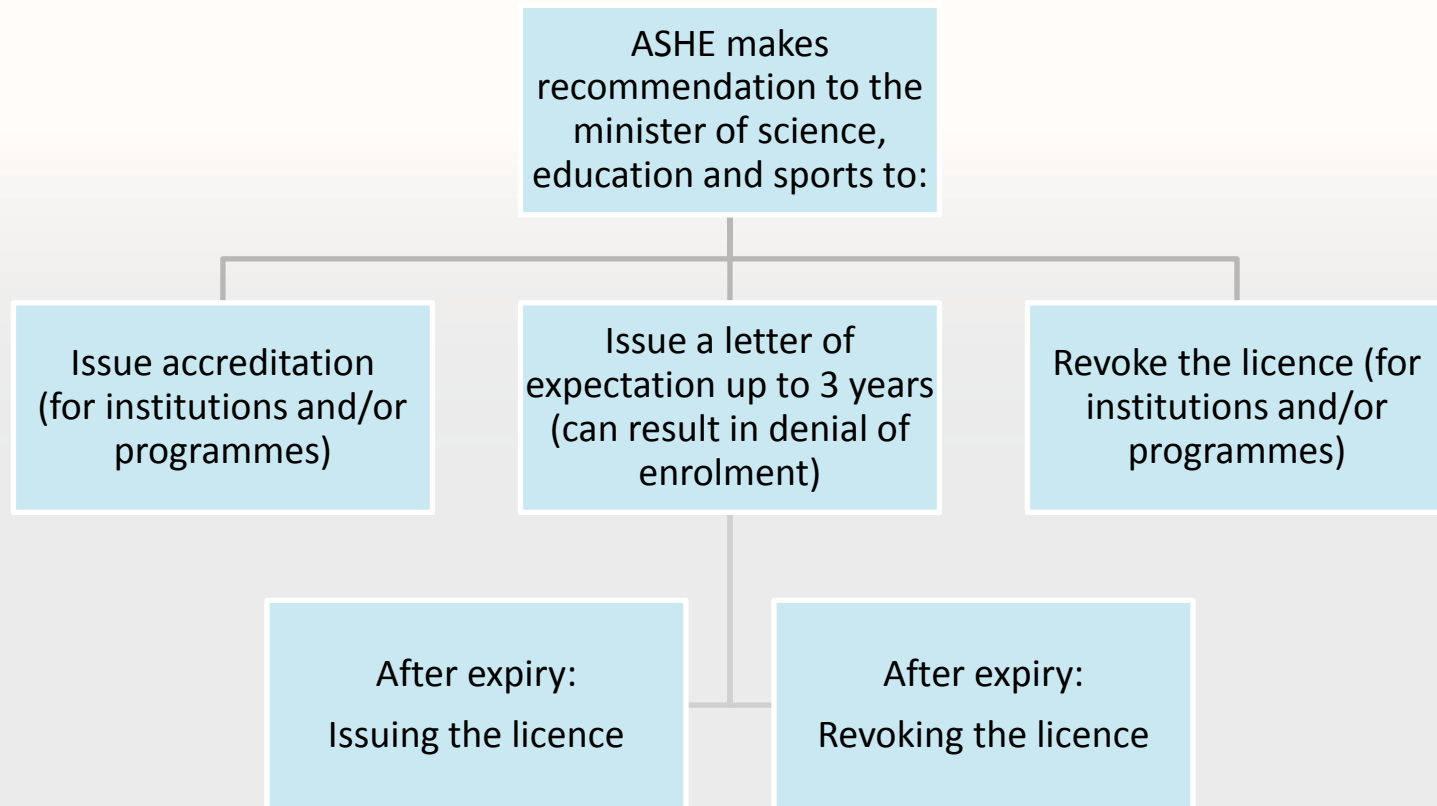
Report with  
quality grade by  
the expert  
panel



Accreditation  
Council



# Re-accreditation-outcomes





## 2010/2012 - Outcomes

- Accreditation granted to **30** HEIs
- Letter of expectation issued to **16** HEIs and **5** study programmes
- Accreditation recommendation to revoke the licence for **4** HEIs/ appeal procedure underway
- Revoke licence to 11 dislocated study programmes

# Strengths



- ASHE is a member of ENQA and EQAR
- External quality assurance procedures in line with the ESG, as well as European and international best practices
- Public call for experts (peer reviews)
- Foreign reviewers in the panels
- Business representatives and students included in the Management Board, Accreditation Council, and review panels
- NGO representative member of the Accreditation Council
- Accreditation reports and decisions are public



# Strengths



- Fair and equitable treatment of all stakeholders (public, private, new or traditional HEIs)
- Involvement of all stakeholders in implementing changes and carrying out activities
- Public discussions with all stakeholders
- Public forum – ASHE website
- ASHE documents are public (standards, criteria & procedures)
- The Ministry clearly committed to independence of the national agency

# Strengths



- Surveys
- Confidentiality Statement – ASHE staff
- Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Statement (everybody participating in external QA procedures)
- Accreditation Council Ethical Code
- No gifts from HEIs, no paid lunches or dinners from HEIs (members of peer-reviews) – written procedure
- ASHE annual report is public

# Challenges and Future



- Further development of external QA procedures in line with the implementation of National Qualification Framework
- Shift from "inputs" to "outputs" /more focus on learning outcomes and employment of graduates
- Thematic reviews of "burning issues" in Croatian HE: doctoral education, learning outcomes...
- Support to evidence-based policy making: focus on data collection

# Challenges and Future



- Help our HEIs to enhance their position in EHEA and worldwide (mobility, cooperation with business)
- Further support to development of quality culture: workshops, reports...
- Strengthen regional and international cooperation

# Thank you



agency for science and higher education croatia





Thank you for your attention!

<https://www.azvo.hr/index.php/en>

