

# ASHE EVALUATIONS IN CROATIAN HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

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agency for science and higher education croatia

ENQA

eqar

# ASHE as evaluation body – in a nutshell



- National accreditation body in HE - member of ENQA & 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 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

# 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

# Legislative framework



- 2003 – Act on the Scientific Activity and Higher Education
- 2006 – ESG adopted in Croatia
- 2009 – Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Science



# HE and science in Croatia – numbers



No of HEIs: 116 (151)

No of students: approx. 170 000

No of scientific organisations: 102

- (25 public research institutes / 77 other)



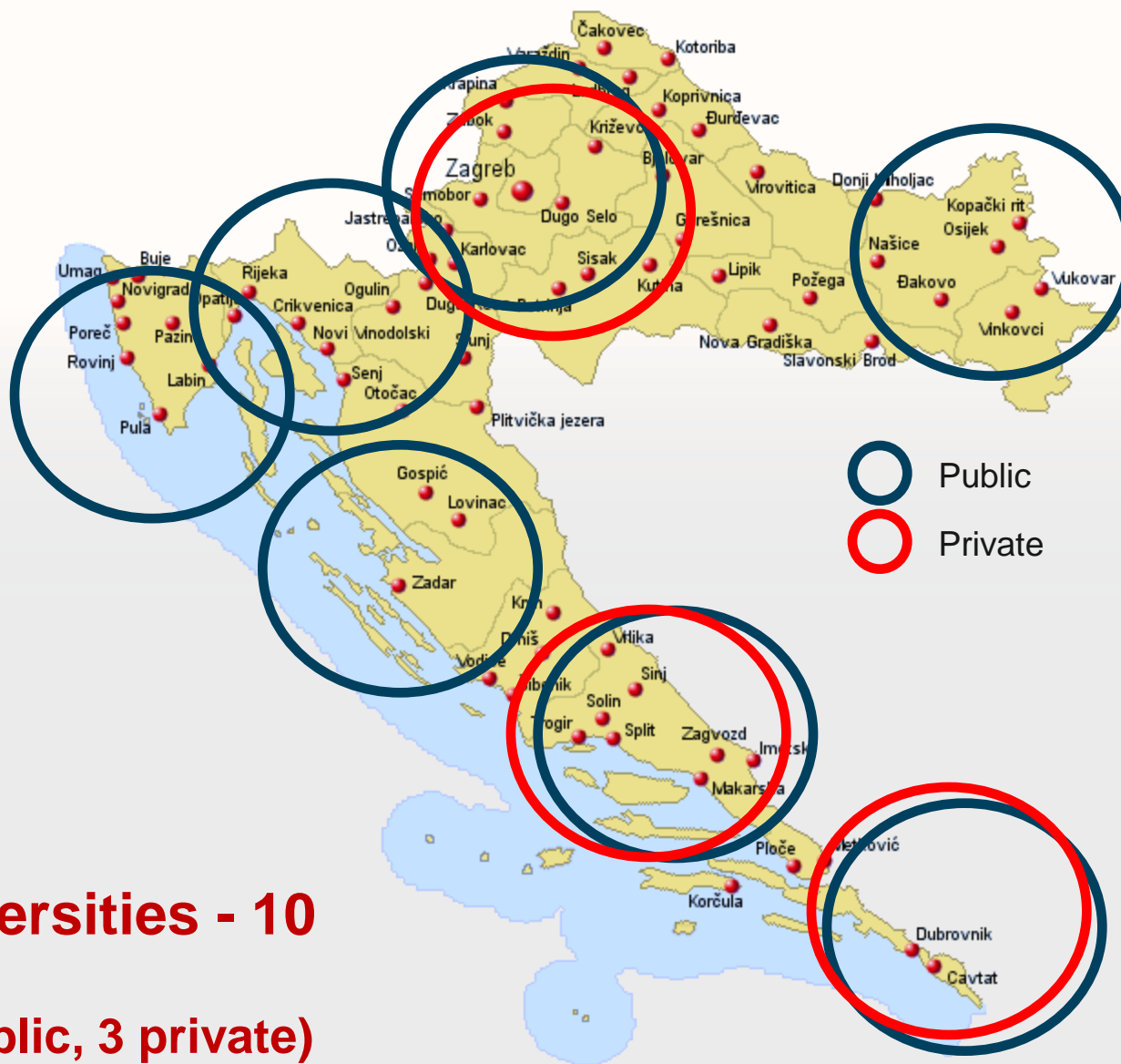




## HIGHER EDUCATION

### Universities (10)

- 3 private
- 7 public:
  - *45 university departments*
  - 67 faculties/academies



## Universities - 10

**(7 public, 3 private)**

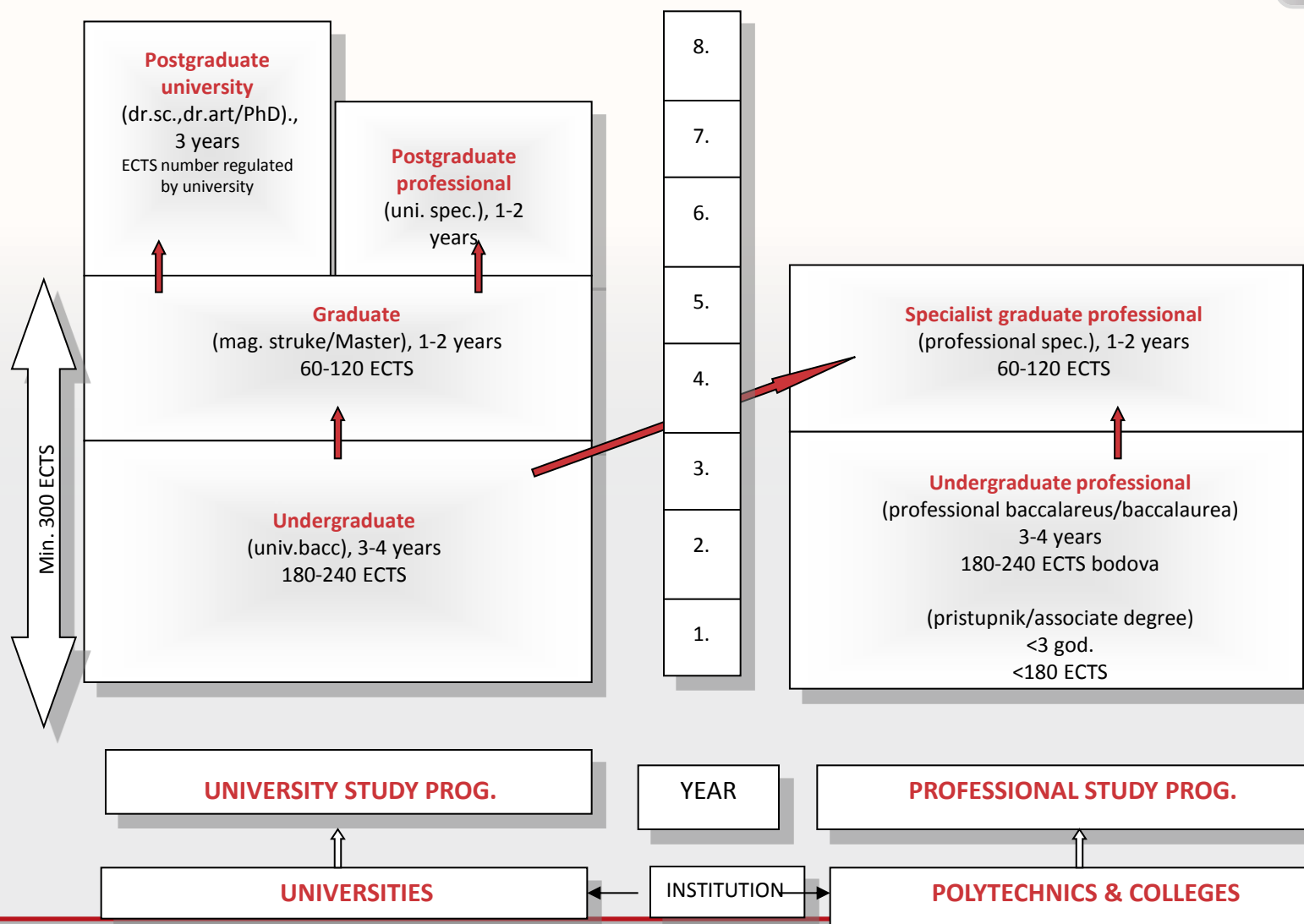




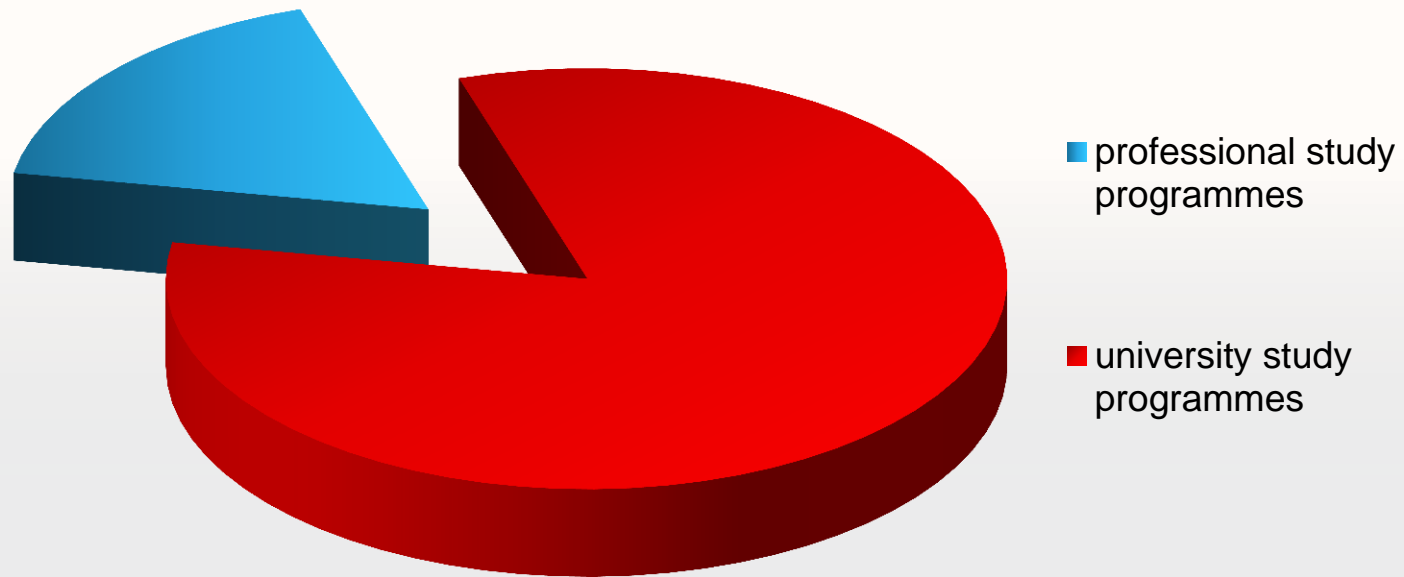
**Colleges - 25**

**(3 public, 22 private)**

# SCHEME OF STUDIES

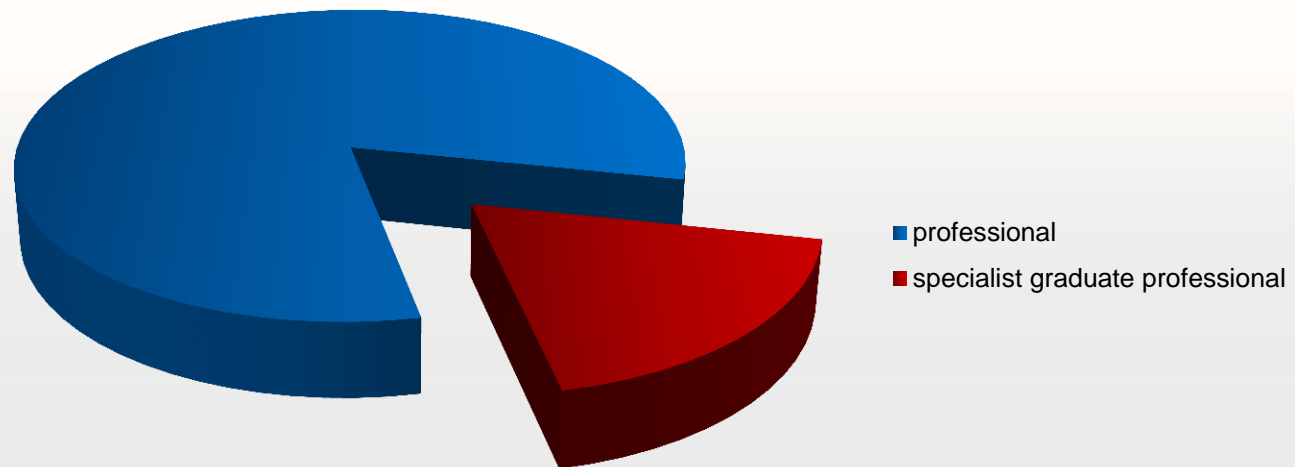


# Type of study programmes



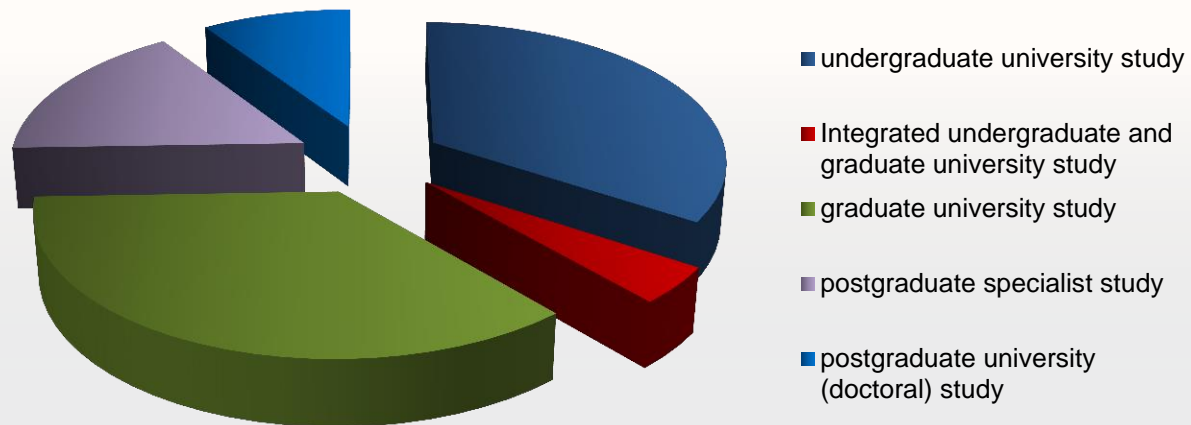
TYPE OF STUDY PROGRAMMES	
professional study programmes	212
university study programmes	1014

# Professional study programmes



professional study programmes	
professional	173
specialist graduate professional	39
total	212

# University study programmes



university study programmes	
undergraduate university study	348
Integrated undergraduate and graduate uni	43
graduate university study	364
postgraduate specialist study	164
postgraduate university (doctoral) study	95
total	1014



# AGENCY FOR SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION (ASHE)



2005 – ASHE established

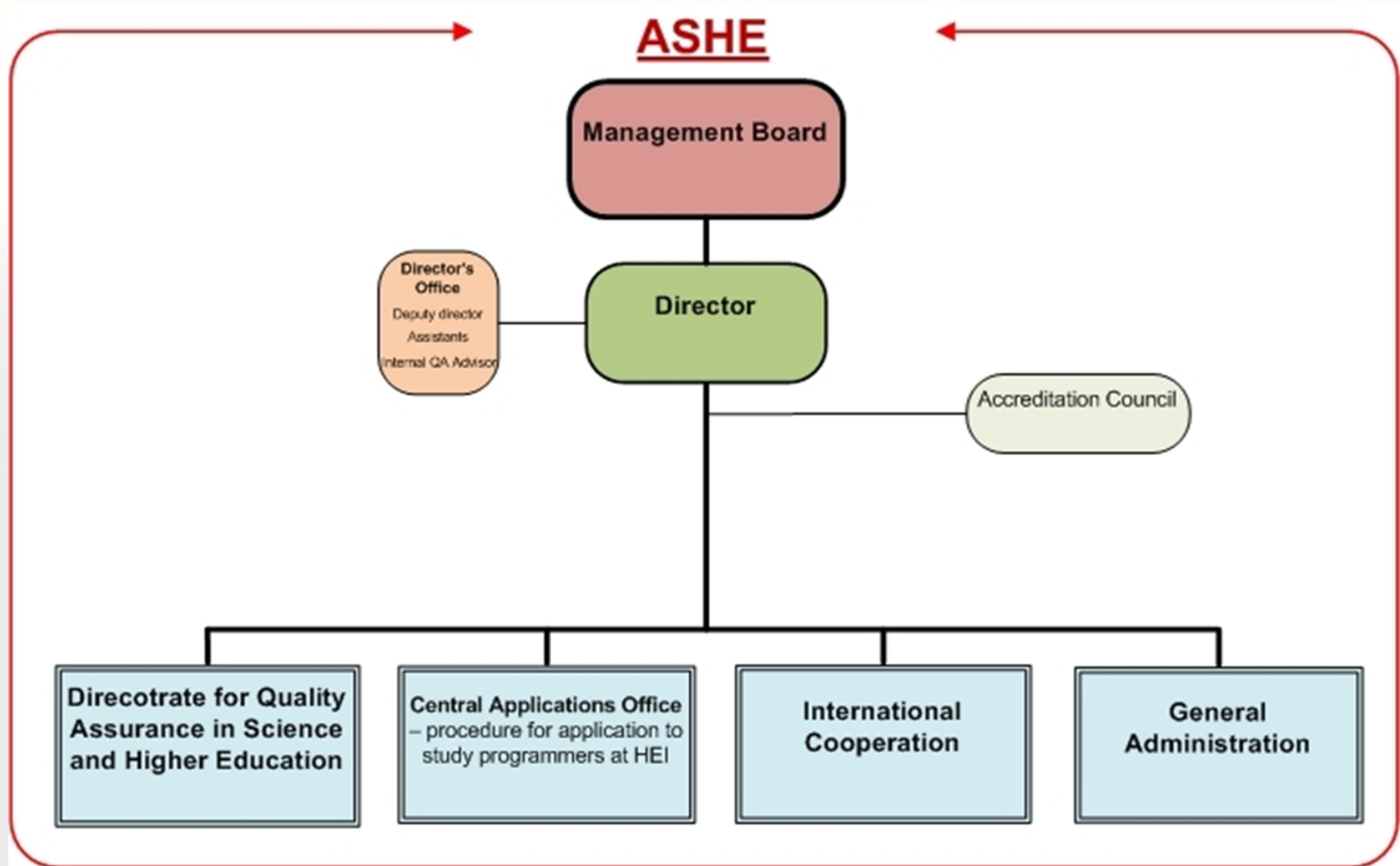
2009 – Act on QA in Science and Higher Education: redefinition of ASHE role; strengthening of its independence



2011 – ENQA/EQAR membership  
– compliance with *European Standards and Guidelines for QA in HE*



# ASHE 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





Initial accreditation

Re-accreditation

Thematic evaluation

Audit

# Initial accreditation



- New HEIs and/or new study programmes
- New scientific organisations established and/or financed by state
- Fulfilment of minimum criteria is checked
- From 07/2012 – 20 procedures completed, 4 pending

# Thematic evaluation



- Scope → a segment of activities of HEIs or scientific organizations or equivalent evaluation subjects
- Outcome → report with assessment

# Thematic evaluation



- 2011/2012 → thematic evaluation of **25** public research institutes
- 2012/2013 → thematic evaluation of all postgraduate doctoral studies
  - thematic evaluation of studies in biomedical field (compliance with EU Directive)
  - thematic evaluation of compliance with minimum criteria in the procedures of approving new study programmes of public universities
- 2013/2014 → thematic evaluation of research facilities in Marine research



- 5-year cycles (2010 – 2015 first cycle)
- Compulsory for:
  - all public and private HEIs (by 2015/2016)
  - all scientific organisations established and/or financed by the state (by 2015/2016)

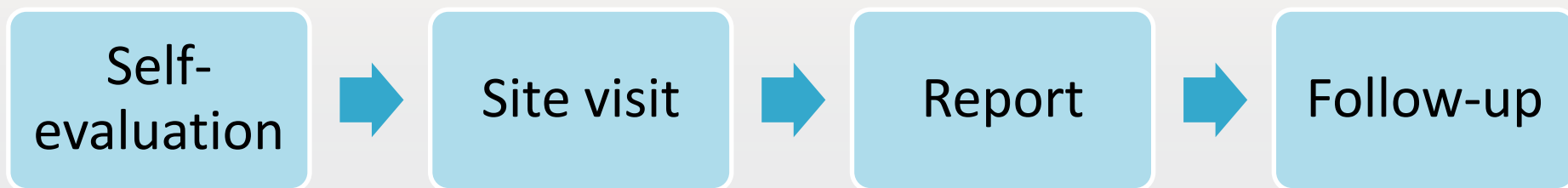


# RE-ACCREDITATION OF HEI - by numbers

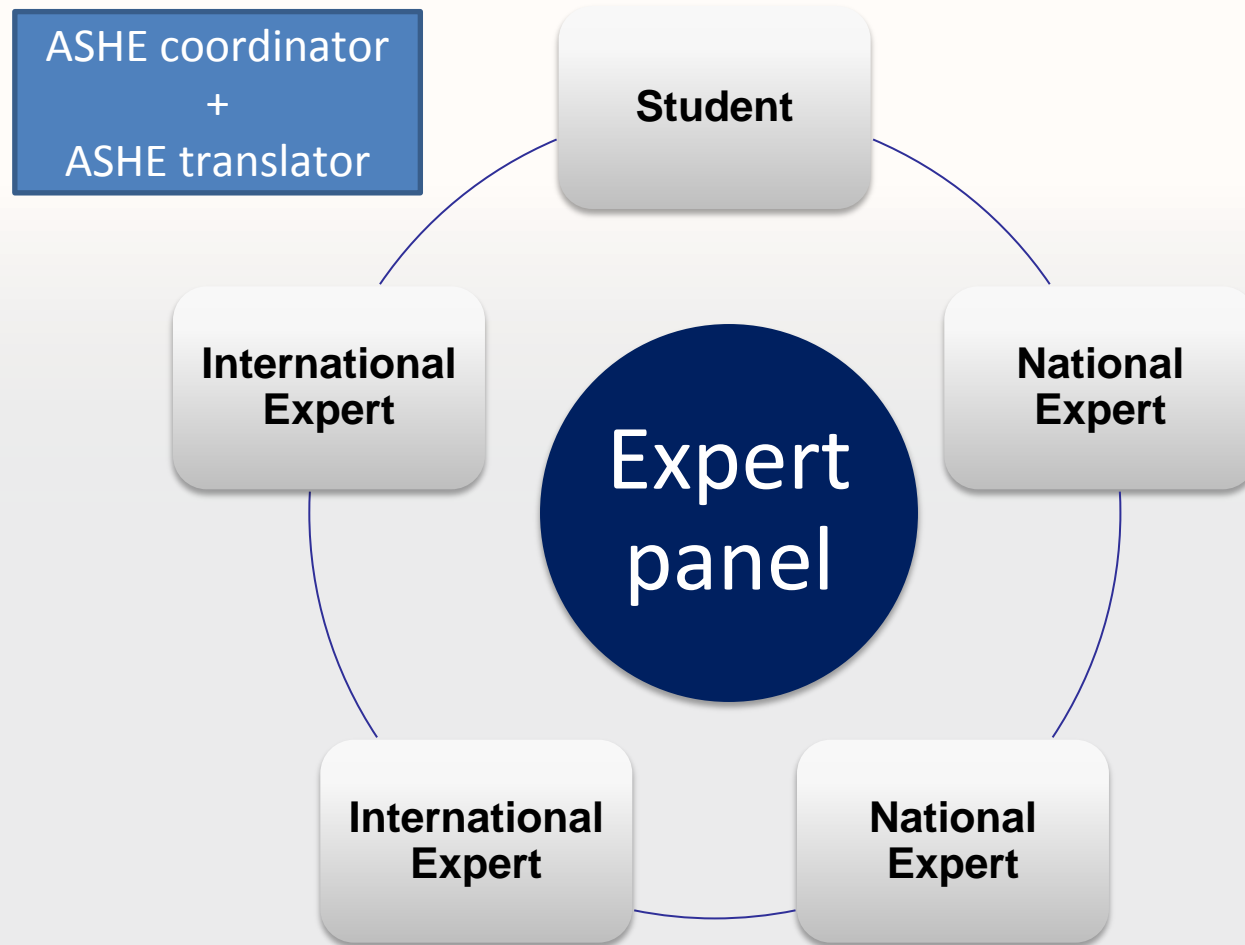


- 2010/2011 re-accreditation of **28** HEIs in the field of economics and business
- 2011/2012 re-accreditation of **32** HEIs in the field of technical sciences
- 2012/2013 re-accreditation of **9** HEIs in the field of biotechnical sciences and **14** private HEIs
- 2013/2014 re-accreditation of **27** HEIs in the field of social sciences and humanities
- 2014/2015 re-accreditation of **41** HEIs in the field of natural sciences, arts, biomedicine and health etc.

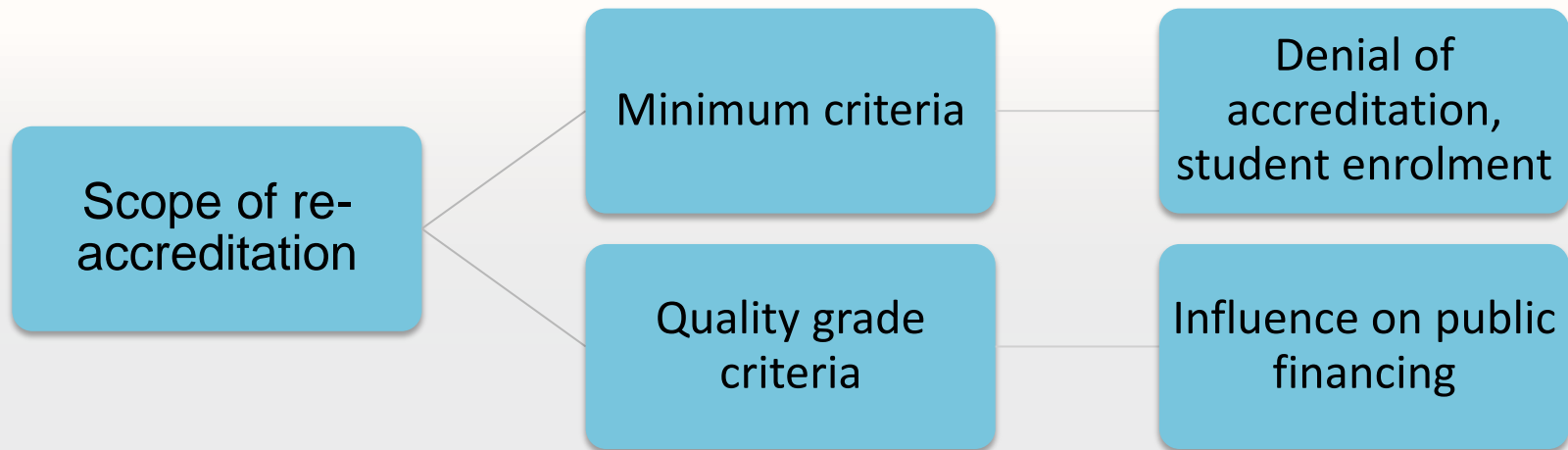
# Re-accreditation procedure



# Re-accreditation - Expert Panel



# RE-ACCREDITATION CRITERIA



# Minimum criteria



## For all HEIs:

- **teacher/student ratio:** 1:30
- **space:** 1 student per 1,25 square meters
- 33 % of study programs conducted by **teachers employed** at the institution (polytechnics and colleges)
- 50 % of study programs conducted by **teachers employed** at the institution (universities and faculties)

# Minimum criteria



## For HEIs listed in the Register of Scientific Organisations:

- 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

# MINIMUM CRITERIA



agencija za znanost i visoko obrazovanje

## ANALYSIS OF CONDITIONS FOR PERFORMING THE STUDY PROGRAM

Core higher education institution: [REDACTED]

Higher education institution: [REDACTED]

Code : 58

Location : Zagreb

Report finished on: 15.04.2013

### Number of students and employed teachers

Number of full-time teachers	99,00
Number of associates	76,00
Number of full-time students	934
- in university study programs	934
- in professional study programs	0
Number of part-time students	108
- in university study programs	108
- in professional study programs	0
Teacher-student ratio*	9,98
Teacher-student ratio**	7,21

### Facility capacity

Size of usable space in m <sup>2</sup>	8.455
Facility capacity per individual student	8,114

### Availability of titles from compulsory reading lists



Number of copies of titles from compulsory reading lists	500
Number of titles on compulsory reading lists	50
Average number of copies per title	10



agency for science

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# QUALITY GRADE CRITERIA



**1**

**INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE**

**2**

**STUDY PROGRAMMES**

**3**

**STUDENTS**

**4**

**TEACHERS**

**5**

**RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY**

**6**

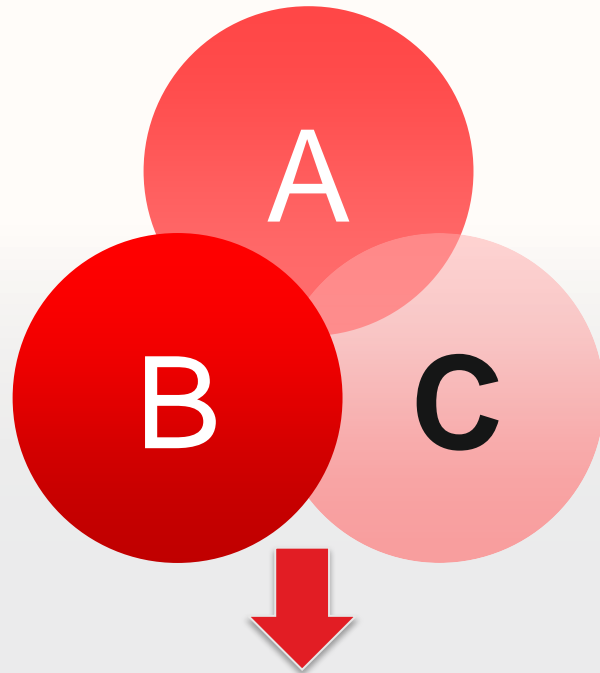
**INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND MOBILITY**

**7**

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



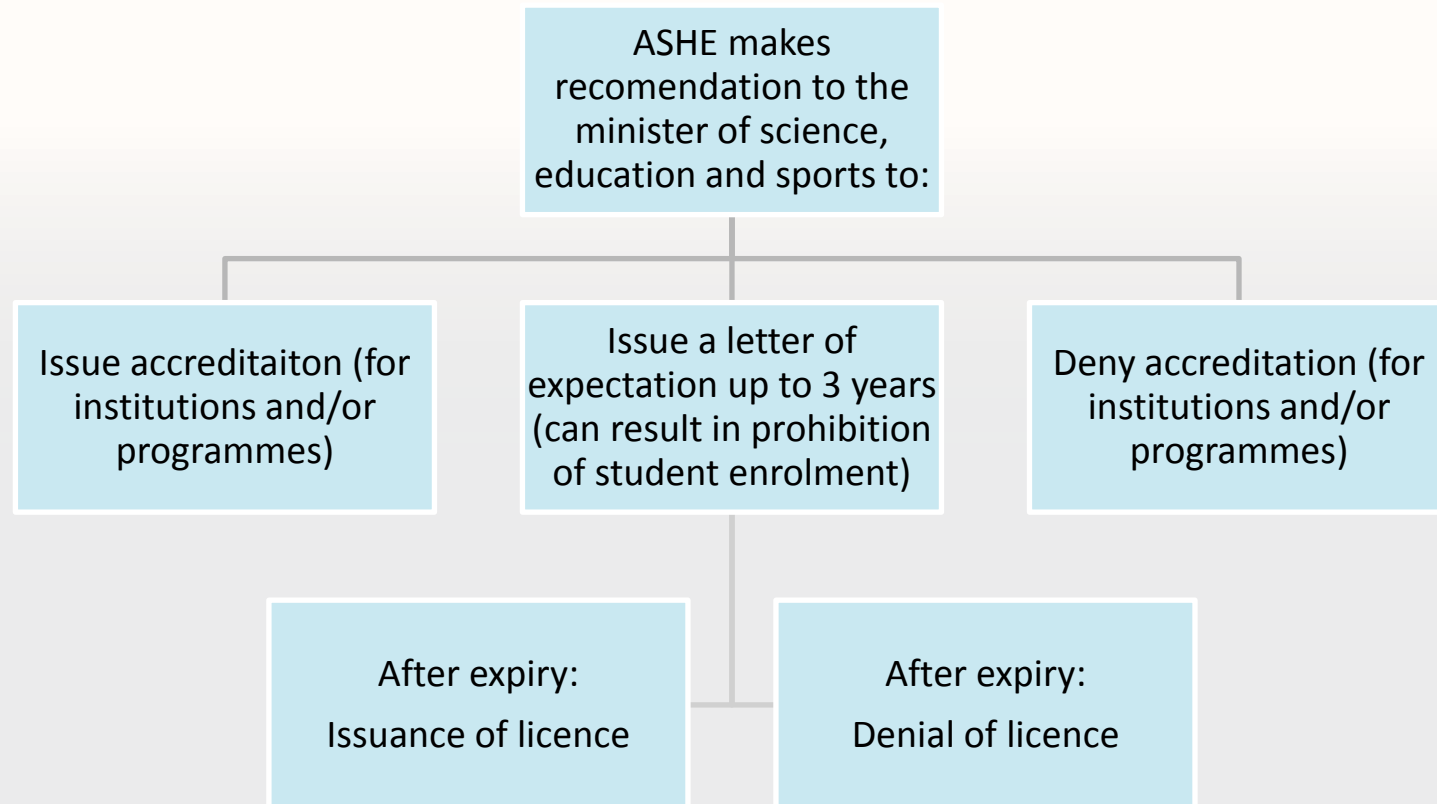
# Re-accreditation report



- A. Report on meeting minimum quantitative criteria (MOZVAG)
- B. Report with quality grade by the expert panel
- C. HEI feedback on final report

**Accreditation Council:  
ASHE  
Recommendation**

# Re-accreditation - outcomes



# Recap - Standards/criteria in 1st cycle



- Minimum criteria (mostly quantitative)
- Quality criteria (mostly qualitative)
  - HEI management and internal QA
  - Study programmes
  - Students
  - Teachers
  - Research/professional activities
  - Mobility and international cooperation
  - Resources

# Goals for the 2nd cycle



Moving the focus from *input* to *output parameters*



Stronger emphasis on *learning outcomes* and *research outcomes*

# Changes in the near future



- Legislative changes in 2015:
  - Act on QA in HE
  - Ordinance on minimum requirements for re-accreditation
  - Strategy of education, science and technology
  - Revised ESG
- Croatian Qualification Framework
  - Implementation of CQF Register – use in development of new programmes and ASHE evaluations

# Audit



- **Scope** → degree of development and efficiency of the internal QA system of HEIs
- **Outcome** → final report with recommendations for improvement and a certificate issued by ASHE

# HEIs QA systems (September 2014)



- 155 QA units are established at HEIs
- 143 QA Ordinances/Regulations
- 116 QA Manuals
- 91 internal audits



# QA Audit model in Croatia

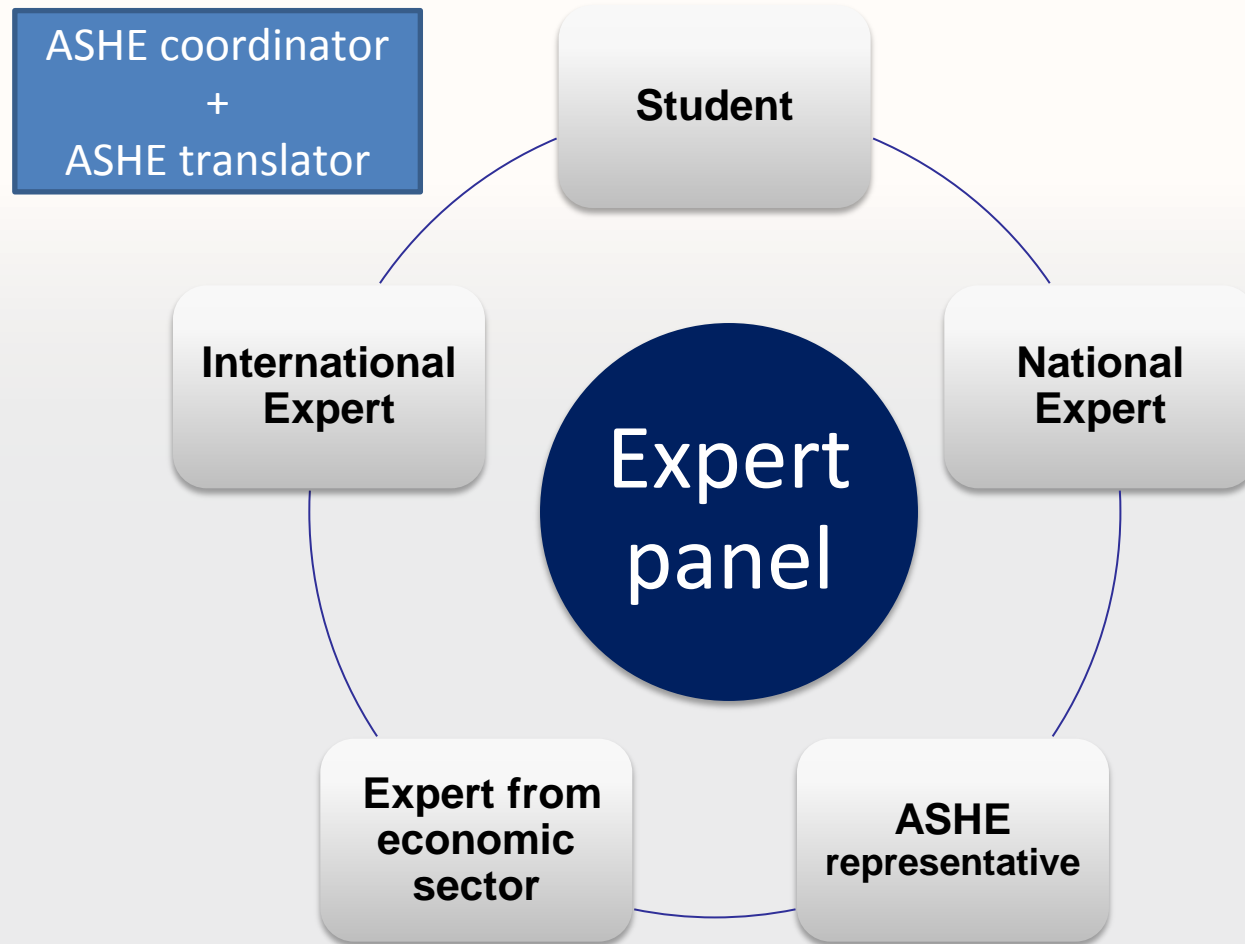


- CARDS 2003 project “Furtherance of the Agency for Science and Higher Education in its Quality Assurance Role and Development of a Supporting Information System“ in 2006/08 - ***pilot project (3 HEIs)***
- Seminars for HEIs
- Develop & promote quality culture
- In-house seminars for ASHE staff
- ASHE audit model, Audit Manual (2010)





# Audit - Expert Panel





- Standards: ESG 1.1-1.7
- Phases of development:
  1. Preliminary (absent)
  2. Initial (emerging)
  3. Developed
  4. Advanced

# Audit Procedure



## Annual plan of audits

Planning of audit  
(with HEI)  
– 4 months

HEIs' Internal  
Audit  
- 2 months



Site visit  
Day 0



Report  
+2 months



Follow-up  
+8 months



Final  
report



## ASHE Accreditation Council:

- Issues certificate to HEI's QA system
- Re-audit
- Re-accreditation

(11 certificates issued so far)

# Audits 2010-2015



2010 – **3** audits completed

2011 – **9** audits completed

2012 – **8** audits completed

2013 – **3** audits completed

...(4 pending, 1 discontinued)


2014 – **6** ongoing procedures




2015 – **6** planned procedures





# Published audit reports



 agency for science and higher education croatia

Q LOGIN |   

About us ▾ Quality ▾ Evaluations ▾ International Activities ▾ Science ▾ Higher Education ▾ Statistics ▾

Evaluations in higher education ▾

- Initial accreditation of study programmes +
- Initial accreditation of higher education institutions +
- Re-accreditation of higher education institutions +
- Reaccreditation of part of the activity of higher education institutions
- Audit of higher education institution ▾
  - Final Reports on External Audits
  - List of certified QAS at HEIs
  - Pilot project (CARDS 2003)
  - List of certified auditors
  - Meta-evaluation
- Thematic evaluation in higher education
- Feasibility of the public financing of study programmes of public universities
- Evaluation of amendments to approved study programmes that affect more than 20% of programme content

Evaluations in science +

External audits in 2012

Summary of Final Audit Report of the University of Zadar

Summary of Final Audit Report of the University of Rijeka

Summary of Final Audit Report of the University of Pula

Summary of Final Audit Report of the Polytechnic of Rijeka

Summary of Final Audit Report of the University of Zagreb

Summary of Final Audit Report of the Polytechnic of Požega

Summary of Final Audit Report of the Polytechnic Velika Gorica

- Audit Pilot Project Analysis
- Diagram of audit
- Audit Manual
- Criteria for assessing the level of development and efficiency of QA systems at HEIs
- Audit procedure outline
- ESG
- Ordinance on Audit
- Plan of external audits in 2010
- Plan of external audits in 2011
- Plan of external audits in 2012
- Plan of external audits in 2013
- Plan of external audits in 2014
- Plan vanjske prosudbe VU za 2015. godinu
- HEI documents for external audit



# Audit results – public universities



HEI	ESG 1.1.	ESG 1.2.1.	ESG 1.2.2.	ESG 1.3.	ESG 1.4.	ESG 1.5.	ESG 1.6.	ESG 1.7.	Overall assessment of QA system:
University of Dubrovnik	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE/ CERTIFICATE
University of J. J. Strossmayer in Osijek	INITIAL PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE
University of Juraj Dobrila in Pula	DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL PHASE	INITIAL PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE
University of Rijeka	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE/ CERTIFICATE
University of Split	PRELIMINARY/INITIAL PHASE	INITIAL PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	PRELIMINARY/INITIAL PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ ADVANCED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE
University of Zadar	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ ADVANCED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE
University of Zagreb	INITIAL PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/ DEVELOPED PHASE

# Experiences: 2010-2014



## Strengths:

- Pilot tested procedure (no significant revisions)
- Full ASHE procedure - certificate „quality label”
- New type of ext. evaluation – different perception of QA
- Follow-up
- Uniform structure of reports (ASHE panel member – „anchor”)
- Continuous training of audit experts (annual workshops)
- Annual QA questionnaires
- Positive impact on HEIs



# Experiences: 2010-2014



## Impact on HEIs:

- Establishment of QA units – QA documentation
- Self-evaluation/internal audits - Quality Culture
- Strategic development
- Positioning at national and international levels
- Awareness of differences between ISO and ESG
- Students and ext. stakeholders in the QAS
- Monitoring of study programmes improved
- Stimulating mobility of teaching staff and students
- Transparency



## Areas for improvement:

- Length of procedure
- Evaluation questionnaires at the end of procedure - relevancy
- Annual planning – (lack of resources - max. 9 institutions)

### ... at HEIs

- Insufficient training of QA officers at HEIs
- Functionality of established QA systems

# Experiences: 2010-2014



- Inertia (resistance to changes)
- Lack of administrative support (and financing)
- QA documentation and procedures (esp. follow-up)
- QAS are mostly input-oriented
- Insufficient dissemination of good practice at national level



Need for national QA network?

# IDEAS FOR THE NEXT AUDIT CYCLE



Nazovite nas: 1-800-555-1212

AA Prijava Registracija

## O nama

Hrvatska mreža jedinica za osiguravanje kvalitete kratica (CroQAnet) nacionalna je mreža jedinica za osiguravanje kvalitete svih visokih učilišta u RH.

Svrha ustroja jedinstvene mreže u RH je omogućiti svim dionicima u visokom obrazovanju razmjenu iskustva u osiguravanju kvalitete, primjeni dobre prakse, stručnog usavršavanja, razvoju kulture kvalitete, što bi služilo kao katalizator promjena u visokom obrazovanju. Mreža obuhvaća sljedeće aktivnosti VU.

1. Prikupljanje, kreiranje i prosljeđivanje informacija o iskustvima, dobroj praksi i trendovima u području osiguravanja kvalitete u visokom obrazovanju na nacionalnoj i na međunarodnoj razini
2. Razvijanje te poticanje primjene nacionalnih i međunarodno prihvaćenih standarda osiguravanja kvalitete u visokom obrazovanju
3. Iskazivanje kolektivnog shvaćanje važnosti osiguravanje kvalitete u visokom obrazovanju aktivnim sudjelovanjem u mreži
4. Promoviranje dobre prakse i poljšavanja kvalitete visokog obrazovanja
5. Pružanje podrške dionicima u stvaranju i objavljivanju usklađenja kvalitete
6. Poboljšanje oblikovanja podataka u kvacitvanju jedinica ECTS-a na istovrsnim studijskim programima (na visokim učilištima po znanstvenim područjima).

Razmjena informacija o osiguravanju kvalitete u visokom obrazovanju provodi se organiziranjem:

- Seminara, radionica i konferencija
- Tiskovinama (bilteni), objavljivanjem dokumenata vezanih uz osiguravanje kvalitete
- Bazama podataka o jedinicama za osiguravanje kvalitete s relevantnim dokumentima o rezultatima rada

# QA network



agency for science and higher education croatia



# IDEAS FOR THE NEXT CYCLE



*(more procedures require)*

## STREAMLINED TRAINING OF AUDITORS

- A) Preliminary online
- B) Selection (and training) of panel chairs
- C) In-depth preparation at panel meeting

# IDEAS FOR THE NEXT AUDIT CYCLE



## FOLLOW-UP

### 1st CYCLE

- 1 6 months follow up
- 2 Final (2nd) audit report



### 2nd CYCLE

- 1 4 months follow up
- 2 Meeting with HEI
- 3 HEI presents results at CroQAnet workshop (after 2 years)

# 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 (125 programmes), learning outcomes...
- Support to evidence-based policy making: focus on data collection

# Challenges and Future



- Help HEIs 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





## **Rethinking the position of ASHE:**

Evaluation/accreditation

National/international context

# Thank you for your attention!



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agency for science and higher education croatia

