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2019 ACTIVITY PLAN

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DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

Dear readers,

It is my pleasure to welcome you at the beginning of the 2018 Annual Report and 2019 Activity Plan.

On the pages that follow, we have prepared for you an overview of all of our activities during the past year, as well as the plans for the period ahead of us. Everything that is being presented to you in this report was made possible by the valuable joint work of all the employees. I would like to firstly thank them, because their diligence and dedication always delights me and constantly reminds me of something I deeply believe in, and that is that only unity can produce good results.

This year was very dynamic and brought many valuable improvements, cooperation's, and activities.

The event that marked this past year was the conference that we organized in Zagreb at the end of October entitled "The future of higher education: Quality assurance as a promoter of change. Global, European and Croatian perspectives." This conference has been the crown of our long-standing work, because we have brought eminent world-class education policy experts to Croatia, some of whom have been associates of ASHE for many years now – Dr. Judith S. Eaton, president of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) in the United States, Dr. Karl Dittrich, president of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) and Ms. Tove Blytt Holmen, board member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), Dr. Francisco Marmolejo, global specialist at the World Bank for tertiary education. Through this conference, we wanted to encourage the debate on the necessity of an independent accreditation. This takes into complementary the various stakeholder perspectives and emphasizes the potential of the accreditation as an instrument for reform, which is a compliment to other sectors, national policies and measures. Independent national agencies for quality assurance in higher education are the best guarantee of the quality of the system, as they have good knowledge of the overall context in which higher education institutions work. They are also the best supporters of their continuous transformation into innovative institutions that successfully deal with the global challenges of the contemporary world.

In addition to this conference, we have organized a series of seminars, workshops, roundtable discussions and meetings with the aim of highlighting the various aspects and challenges faced by those who make up the system of higher education. We also focused on the difficulties that mark the transition from higher education to the labour market, and hence the issue of creating a better link between the economy and higher education.

The Agency has also started a new cycle of re-accreditation according to the new model that has been improved from the experiences from the first cycle, the revised ESG 2015 and examples of good international practice. The pilot re-accreditation, as well as the feedback we have received from the higher education institutions, have clearly demonstrated what is most important-through the new model of re-accreditation.

Higher education intuitions are encouraged to pursue further quality improvement, which is the underlying goal of the new cycle. I began the introduction with a thank you, and I will finish the same way – I thank our Agency's Management Board, Accreditation Council, and the



¹ The Board of the Agency for Science and Higher Education adopted the text of the Annual Report for 2018 and the Plan of activities for 2019 at the session held on 18th February 2019.

National Council for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development, the Council of Polytechnics and Colleges, scientific field committees, scientific area councils and field committees on their cooperation and contribution in the past year. Also, thank you to all the members of the expert panels and partners in evaluation, including all the students involved in the work of the Agency, either through the academic community, public administration and the economy.

Thank you to all the employees of the Agency, as well as the associates, and especially to the large number of students who work with us, some even for many years.

As a person who has devoted their entire professional life to higher education and science, I am deeply convinced that the ongoing quality of thinking, through joint efforts and partnership dialogue involving all stakeholders, is the only logical response to the challenges that higher education currently faces worldwide. Quality assurance is not just compliance with certain standards - it is, above all, the continuous support to academic processes, which ultimately, results in excellence, creativity, innovation and encourages higher education institutions to use their autonomy and academic freedom in the best possible way.

*Professor Jasmina Havranek, PhD
Director of the Agency for Science and Higher Education*

"It is a great pleasure to work with the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE). Not only is ASHE a wonderful international partner, engaging with us at the U.S. Council for Higher Education Accreditation International Quality Group (CHEA/CIQG) and a signatory to our Memorandum of Affiliation in support the CIQG International Quality Principles, the organization has provided outstanding leadership in Croatia and the surrounding region, moving forward to strengthen quality assurance, build regional capacity and to play a prominent role in the European Higher Education Area."

dr. Judith S. Eaton, president of the Council
for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)

2018 IN REVIEW

- Application of the new model of re-accreditation
- A Guide has been published for members of expert panels in evaluating higher education institutions and scientific organisations
- The pilot re-accreditation was carried out at 7 higher education institutions
- Evaluation for 16 doctoral programmes was conducted at 10 higher education institutions
- 32 members of expert panels participated in the re-accreditation of doctoral studies
- The follow-up committee issued 48 opinions in follow-up procedures, 23 opinions for doctoral studies and 25 opinions for public scientific institutes
- Seven applications for initial accreditation of scientific activity were received and resolved
- The pilot procedure for audit was carried out at 3 higher education institutions
- 2 meetings for the CroQAnet network were held
- 3 sessions of the NCSHETD were held
- 7 sessions of the regional scientific area councils were held
- 111 sessions of the scientific field committees were held with a total of 1519 decisions made
- 1 thematic and 4 regular sessions of CPC were held
- Scientific committees held 28 sessions through which 344 positive opinions were made on meeting the conditions in the appointment to teaching grades
- The committee for ethics in science and higher education held 5 regular sessions
- 26 918 candidates were granted the right to enrol in one of the study programmes of higher education institutions in the Republic of Croatia in the summer enrolment period, while in the autumn enrolment period 4453 obtained the right to enrol
- The results of the research on the employability of graduate students who graduated in the academic year 2015/16 were presented
- New service “e-Exchange of student grades” was enabled on e-Citizens portal
- Conference was held entitled “*The future of higher education: Quality assurance as a promoter of change*”
- The National ENIC/NARIC office fully admitted 1762 foreign higher education qualifications for the purpose of accessing the labour market
- ASHE became a member of *GUIDE Association*
- ASHE participated as a coordinator and partner in 10 international projects
- A cycle of workshops *Careering* for career advisors at higher education institutions was conducted as part of project SKAZVO
- As part of the HRMinHEI framework, an online tool was produced for self-evaluation and analysis of human resources management functions at higher education institutions



1

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION

RE-ACCREDITATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Completion of the pilot re-accreditation and publication of the analysis

ASHE on the basis of the public call for participation in the pilot project, chose 7 higher education institutions that went through the re-accreditation according to the new model. The higher educations were the following:

- Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, University of Zagreb
- Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zagreb
- Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, University of Split
- Faculty of Engineering, Architecture and Geodesy, University Split
- Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Rijeka
- University college of Economics, Entrepreneurship and Management Nikola Šubic Zrinski
- Križevci College of Agriculture

Upon the completion of the first cycle of re-accreditation, ASHE in cooperation with the Accreditation Council, has developed a new model of re-accreditation that is being applied in the new five-year cycle. The model was improved in accordance with the experience from the first cycle, the revised ESG 2015 and the examples of good international practice.

All the documents on which the new model of re-accreditation was based in 2017, passed the public hearing process in which more than a hundred comments were collected. All the comments, as well as ASHE's comments are available on the website: <https://www.azvo.hr/hr/azvo- vijesti/1638-objavljena-izvjesca-o-provedenoj-javnoj-raspravi-o-standardima-i-postupku-reakreditacije-visokih-ucilista>.

On the basis of the public call for participation in the pilot project, ASHE selected seven higher education institutions that have undergone the re-accreditation according to the new model. As a result of the experiences of the pilot project of re-accreditation, an analysis of the pilot re-accreditation was made on seven higher education institutions, which included a few suggestions for the improvement of the re-accreditation documents. Based on this, the final version of the re-accreditation documents was embraced by the Accreditation Council, and is available on the website <https://www.azvo.hr/hr/vrednovanja/postupci-vrednovanja-u-visokom-obrazovanju/novi-ciklus-reakreditacije-visokih-ucilista>

The analysis of the pilot re-accreditation at the seven higher education institutions showed the following:

The development of the new quality standards has made a significant improvement compared to the first cycle. This part of the first cycle was rated poorly by the members of the expert panels, who often stated that there were too many standards and that they were not clear enough. By reducing the number of standards as well as the new way of defining them, so that along each standard there are elements of standards as well as examples of indicators and evidence, the clarity and understanding has been achieved.

The introduction of certain minor changes in re-accreditation have contributed to the quality of this procedure. It was particularly helpful to extend the duration of the expert panel visits to higher education institutions. This allowed the expert panels to better get to know the work of each higher education institutions, discuss any concerns and dedicate more time to review all the documentation and evidence. It is very helpful to provide a special time frame in the protocol of visits where there are no conversations with the groups being interviewed, but rather to dedicate that time to review the documentation and evidence, enable the possibility of additional *ad hoc* meetings as needed and meetings with the employer representatives and alumni.

Even though it was not possible to check in the pilot re-accreditation, it is expected that putting additional emphasis on the follow-up monitoring of higher education institutions after the carried-out re-accreditation will have a significant impact on the implementation of

recommendations from the re-accreditation and the improvement of quality assurance.

Additionally, intensified training and preparation of higher education institutions and panel members have proved to be very useful. Annual workshops were held for potential domestic panel members and students as well as a day-long workshop for the entire panel were held the day before the visit to the evaluated higher education institution and the number of workshops for higher education institutions themselves was increased. It is exactly this preparation of the higher education institutions themselves and the panels as well that proved to be crucial to the quality of re-accreditations. However, despite the increased engagement of ASHE employees in the educational segment, the experience of the conducted pilot re-accreditations shows that additional effort is needed in this area in order to make the preparation of higher education institutions and panels even better. Therefore, it is suggested to further improve the quality of the workshops and encourage the active participation from participants and work on concrete examples and simulations of practical examples as well as separately tailored trainings for foreign panel members.

The new way of producing a higher education institutions self-evaluation according to which the textual part is compiled based on the quality standards (without additional instructions and forms), and the numerical data entered directly into the upgraded information system MOZVAG, proved to be better than in the first cycle. This approach makes it easier for the panels to evaluate each standard, and the higher education institution can better assess the extent to which it meets each standard. Numerical data was also presented in electronic form to make it easier to use in order to develop various system level analysis and synthesis. This is a way to ensure the continued availability of actual and current data on higher education for different purposes. Nevertheless, higher education institutions continue to point out that data entry into the new system is very complex and requires significant efforts. Further work on the improvement of this system is expected to address the identified shortcomings and to better connect with other bases in the higher education system in order to reduce the burden on higher education institutions.

The new way of assessing quality standards as clearly defined rules for concluding accreditation opinions has progressed in relation to the first cycle, as it provides greater consistency in evaluation and decision-making. The introduction of key standards that have a higher impact on the topic's rating, as well as on the outcome of the procedure, is a better approach than using average grades. However, the pilot re-accreditation showed that the number of key standards is too large and that is why in the final version of the document this number has been reduced (six key standards). In addition, it has been noted that the evaluation rules were defined too strictly and in the final version of the document these rules were slightly modified in such a way that the key standards continue to have a greater impact on the assessment of the topic and the outcome of the procedure, but they still leave enough room for the Accreditation Council to decide on the outcome depending on the context and taking into account all the elements.

A significant shift has been made to the quality of the panels' final reports compared to the reports from the first cycle. The new reports are more detailed, more informative, the finds are better correlated with the evidence, and the recommendations are more specific and generally provide more information on the quality of the different segments of the work of the higher education institutions. These types of reports will surely be more useful to higher education institutions themselves, in order to further improve quality assurance, while also being useful to the public by providing better information on quality. This certainly contributed to the better preparation of the panels, as well as the fact that in order to produce a draft report, an additional day was provided in the protocol.

To conclude, the experience of the pilot re-accreditation carried out according to the new model has shown that significant progress has been made in relation to the documents of the re-accreditation, in particular the quality standards, through re-accreditation, the method of producing a self-evaluation and the system of grading. Based on the experiences from the pilot re-accreditation, and feedback from higher education institutions themselves, it is most important that the new model of re-accreditation of higher education institutions encourages

further improvement of quality assurance, which is the underlying goal in the new cycle of re-accreditation and the usefulness of the mentioned procedure is unquestionable.

Comments:

- Quality standards and the whole procedure are very clear, precise and elaborate to the smallest detail
- Re-accreditation is reasonably designed, optimal duration
- The benefits of the re-accreditation procedure have already been assured in the first re-accreditation and therefore have significantly improved the work at the institution
- Data entry into the MOZVAG system requires additional engagement and efforts of the higher education institution
- Definitely useful experience as well as a high level of assistance from the ASHE coordinators in the preparation of the re-accreditation team
- The total participation in the re-accreditation was a highly educational and positive experience, special acknowledgement to ASHE for the organisation of the entire project
- I have come across some good practices that we can apply to the home institution as well.

(source: official ASHE e-mail, anonymous survey)

Publication of a Guide for members of expert panels in the procedures for evaluating higher education institutions and scientific organisations

The Agency for Science and Higher Education published a guide entitled "Higher education in the Republic of Croatia: Guide for members of expert panels in evaluations of higher education institutions and scientific organisations" in English and Croatian in February 2018.

The publication was presented within the framework of the SKAZVO project "Improvement of quality assurance and enhancement systems in higher education" co-financed by The European Union as part of the operational programme "Efficient human resources" from The European Social Fund. The publication contains a section of relevant facts about the system of higher education and science in the Republic of Croatia. The main goal of this Guide is to provide insight into the Croatian system of higher education and science and its specific features to national and international members of expert panels that participate in valuation procedures conducted by the Agency for Science and Higher Education.



Publication "Higher education in the Republic of Croatia"

Re-accreditation

Within the framework of the SKAZVO project, the Agency for Science and Higher Education started a new cycle of re-accreditations in 2017. According to the Re-accreditation Plan of higher education institutions in 2018², the Agency for Science and Higher Education conducted re-accreditations for:

1. Faculty of Architecture, University of Zagreb
2. Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing, University of Zagreb
3. Faculty of Geodesy, University of Zagreb
4. Faculty of Transport and Traffic Sciences, University of Zagreb
5. Faculty of Civil Engineering, University of Zagreb

² Re-accreditation Plan for 2018. Taken from https://www.azvo.hr/images/stories/Akreditacija/Plan_reakreditacije_2018.pdf (pristupljeno 17. 12. 2018.).

6. Faculty of Graphic Arts, University of Zagreb
7. Faculty of Mining, Geology and Petroleum Engineering, University of Zagreb
8. Faculty of Geotechnical Engineering, University of Zagreb
9. Faculty of Maritime Studies, University of Split
10. Faculty of Mechanical Engineering in Slavonski Brod, University J. J. Strossmayer in Osijek
11. Faculty of Metallurgy, University of Zagreb
12. Faculty of Engineering, University of Rijeka
13. Faculty of Civil Engineering, University of Rijeka
14. Faculty of Maritime Studies, University of Rijeka
15. Faculty of Civil Engineering, University of J. J. Strossmayer, Osijek
16. Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Computer Science and Information Technology, University of J. J. Strossmayer, Osijek
17. Faculty of Economics, University of Zagreb
18. Faculty of Economics, University of Split
19. Faculty of Economics, University of J. J. Strossmayer, Osijek
20. Faculty of Organisation and Informatics, University of Zagreb
21. Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, University of Rijeka.

The procedure was conducted in spring and autumn of 2018, along with domestic members, representatives of the economy and international experts from the following higher education institutions:

- Faculty of Architecture and Design, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Kingdom of Norway
- Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana, Republic of Slovenia
- Polytechnic of Milan, Republic of Italy
- Swansea University, Wales, United Kingdom
- Department of Geosciences and Natural Resource Management, University of Copenhagen, Kingdom of Denmark
- University of Tartu, Republic of Estonia
- Department of Geodesy and Surveying, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Hellenic Republic
- Faculty of Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation, University of Twente, Kingdom of Netherlands
- Faculty of Aerospace Engineering, Delft University of Technology, Kingdom of Netherlands
- Department of Engineering, Roma Tre University, Republic of Italy
- City, University of London, United Kingdom
- Department of Civil Engineering, Aalborg University, Kingdom of Denmark
- Fakultät für elektrotechnik, informationstechnik und medientechnik, University of Wuppertal, Federal Republic of Germany
- University of Lorraine, Loria, Republic of France
- Vilnius Academy of Arts, Graphic Art Department, Republic of Lithuania
- FSCN Mid Sweden University, Kingdom of Sweden
- Department of Geosciences and Natural Resources Management, University of Copenhagen, Kingdom of Denmark



Re-accreditation of the Faculty of Economics, University of Zagreb (source: EFZG)

- Eurasia Institute of Earth Sciences, Istanbul Technical University, Republic of Turkey
- CIRIAF, University of Perugia, Republic of Italy
- University of Copenhagen, Kingdom of Denmark
- Faculty of Engineering, Lund University, Kingdom of Sweden
- Department of Maritime Operations, Faculty of Technology, Natural Sciences and Maritime Sciences, Kingdom of Norway
- Department of Maritime and Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering and Technology, Liverpool John Moores University, United Kingdom
- Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of Bristol, United Kingdom
- Faculty of Engineering, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom
- University of Strathclyde Glasgow, United Kingdom
- School of Computer Science, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom
- School of Civil Engineering, University of Leeds, United Kingdom
- School of Science and Engineering, University of Dundee, Scotland, United Kingdom
- University of Technology, Kingdom of Sweden
- University of the West of Scotland, United Kingdom
- University of Architecture and Urbanism, Bucharest, Romania
- Tallinn University of Technology, Republic of Estonia
- Delft University of Technology, Kingdom of Netherlands
- Institut für Theoretische Informatik, University of Lübeck, Federal Republic of Germany
- Faculty of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Kingdom of Norway
- Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Groningen, Kingdom of Netherlands
- Faculty of Business and Economics, Technical University of Dresden, Federal Republic of Germany
- Faculty of Economics, University of Ljubljana, Republic of Slovenia
- Oxford Brookes University, Oxford Brookes Business School, United Kingdom
- Business School, University of Mannheim, Federal Republic of Germany
- Institute of Accounting and Taxation, University of Graz, Republic of Austria
- Faculty of Business Administration and Economics, Bielefeld University, Federal Republic of Germany
- School of Informatics, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom
- University Fernando Pessoa, Portuguese Republic
- University of Coimbra, Portuguese Republic
- Guildhall School of Business and Law, London Metropolitan University, United Kingdom
- Faculty of Tourism Studies –University of Primorska, Republic of Slovenia



Re-accreditation of the Faculty of Maritime Studies, University of Split
(source: Irena Škarica)

Also, in June 2018³, the Accreditation Council of the Agency for Science and Higher Education issued a Re-accreditation Plan for 2019, according to which the following higher education institutions will be evaluated:

1. Faculty of Food Technology and Biotechnology of the University of Zagreb
2. Faculty of Forestry of the University of Zagreb
3. Faculty of Agriculture, University of Josip Juraj Strossmayer, Osijek

³ Re-accreditation plan for 2019. Taken from: https://www.azvo.hr/images/stories/vrednovanja/Plan_reakreditacije_za_2019...godinu_-_AZV0.pdf (17. 12. 2018.)

4. Faculty of Food Technology of the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek
5. University of Split - University Department for Sea Studies
6. Technical Polytechnic in Zagreb
7. Polytechnic Lavoslav Ružička in Vukovar
8. Polytechnic Marko Marulić
9. Polytechnic Nikola Tesla in Gospić
10. Public Polytechnic Baltazar Zaprešić
11. Polytechnic of Hrvatsko Zagorje in Krapina
12. Polytechnic University in Bjelovar
13. Polytechnic of Požega
14. Polytechnic in Slavonski Brod
15. Šibenik College
16. Velika Gorica Polytechnic
17. VERN Polytechnic
18. Business Polytechnic of Zagreb
19. Polytechnic Pula - Higher technical-business school
20. RIT Croatia (Rochester Institute of Technology, Croatia)
21. RRIIF College for Financial Management
22. College of Information Technology
23. University College of Management and Design Aspira
24. College for Tourism and Informatics Management in Virovitica
25. College for Finance and Law EFFECTUS
26. Algebra University College
27. Zagreb School of Economics and Management

The decision on amendments for the Re-accreditation Plan for higher education institutions in 2019⁴ was made in July 2018 where subentry 28 was added after subentry 27:

28. Libertas International University

COMMENTS FROM INTERNATIONAL PANEL MEMBERS

- *The Agency's employees were excellent and should be acknowledged for their outstanding work in organizing and conducting visits as part of the re-accreditation.*
- *Excellent, very friendly and productive.*
- *Special acknowledgment for the communication with the Agency before the visit, as well as during the visit itself. The procedure was well organized from the very beginning to the end.*
- *I especially enjoyed the friendly approach, without stress, and all the days of the visit were very well prepared.*
- *The Agency was ready to help during all the stages of the procedure.*
- *Employees are highly qualified, professional and kind.*
- *It was great and organized in a professional manner.*
- *The coordinators were available for guidance at all stages.*

⁴ Decision on amendments for re-accreditation Plan for 2019 taken from:

<https://www.azvo.hr/images/stories/vrednovanja/Odluka%20o%20dopuni%20Plana%20reakreditacije%20visokih%20u%C4%8Dili%C5%A1ta%20u%202019.%20godini.pdf> (17. 12. 2018.)

- I got answers to all my questions, and more than that.
- Everything was very good and up to date.
- Very professional, no objections.
- Coordinators maintained an excellent level of communication the whole time with the members of the expert panels.
- Prior to the visits we communicated via e-mail, which was very fast and professional.
- Administrative support was very friendly while very professional at the same time. All the questions were answered very timely with flexibility.

(source: official ASHE e-mail, anonymous survey)

COMMENTS FROM LOCAL MEMBERS OF EXPERT PANELS

- It was a great pleasure to work with you and I look forward to any future cooperation. Special acknowledgment should be given for the organisation of the re-accreditation and the faculty visits, you really did an excellent job!
- I am very pleased with the support of the coordinator because he prepared me for the re-accreditation, answered all my questions before / during and after the re-accreditation.
- I recognized some good practices that we could apply to our home institution, and I recognized some of the things that I can directly apply in my work, so I would say that the experience, though intense and demanding, was useful.
- It is very useful to take part in this process from the perspective of learning and personal development, and it is useful to connect through other members of the panel through a joint discussion, we come to new insights and conclusions ... I see many positive aspects and not a single negative in participating in this.
- I need to praise the coordinators. Rarely have I met people who are at the same time highly professional, yet they can establish a quality, almost friend-like relationship without violating professional standards. Furthermore, their knowledge about the procedure, about the different elements of standards is exceptional. In addition, they are very motivated, engaged, are always trying to help the panel and be at their service. These are wonderful people and professionals and deserve to be acknowledged!
- I highly appreciate the engagement and professional relationship of the Agency's staff in all segments of work. Especially in regards to respecting deadlines.
- The coordinator notified me by e-mail regarding the process in a timely manner, and I got all the necessary documents to prepare me well for the re-accreditation, as well as many useful tips and instructions that helped me to understand what was expected from me and how to do my best work.
- Without the education and presence of the members of the Agency in the evaluation, it would be impossible to carry out the evaluation.
- I believe that the re-accreditation is necessary if we want to improve the system of higher education in the Republic of Croatia. It will be interesting to see the changes (if they happen).
- Clear standards and criteria, as well as the quality of guidelines and instructions, simplified the re-accreditation, as well as the mutual communication of members of the expert panel for re-accreditation from Croatia and other countries.
- The work of the staff was very professional, everything was prepared in time, we got all the information we needed in a timely manner, we got answers to all of our questions ... I have no negative comments and I would like to praise the work of the staff.
- The administrative and professional support from the coordinators is excellent which is expected when considering that they have many years of experience in the conducting of these procedures.
- The entire ASHE team that was in charge of re-accreditation led by the coordinators was exceptionally competent and professional and was fully available to all members of the panel in cases of ambiguity and additional questions. All the documents that we needed to visit the institution itself (Self-Evaluation of the institution) were sent by the coordinator on time and we as a panel needed a day to study and

prepare ourselves. All praise for the professionalism and kindness of the whole team!

- *The education programme was very well prepared, and all the members of ASHE contributed to it so all members of the panel could get all the information they needed. All the members of ASHE who held the presentations also had excellent knowledge of English.*
- *Coordinators were very professional, helpful and provided support throughout the whole accreditation. With their relaxed and confident performance, they established trust between the panel members and the host institution.*
- *Throughout the whole procedure for accreditation and writing the reports, the coordinators were present and resolved all possible ambiguities, if any arose. The instructions were also written in a simple and informative way, so there was not much need for additional interpretations.*

(source: official ASHE e-mail, anonymous survey)

COMMENTS FROM HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

- *All communication was at a high level of professionalism.*
- *The knowledge as well as the professional relations were on a high level.*
- *The information obtained through preparatory workshops, via communication with ASHE staff and through ASHE web pages, was very useful in order to prepare for the re-accreditation procedures.*
- *The procedure for re-accreditation has helped us figure out where we currently stand and on what things we need to work on more.*
- *The employees of the Agency who were present in the procedure and communicated with us were excellent and of great help.*
- *I commend the ASHE employees. They are always available for help.*
- *Exceptional help from all the people involved in the accreditation procedures.*
- *Quick answers, resolving all issues that arose and overall cooperation within the framework of the rules.*
- *Although the procedures of the re-accreditation was demanding, we consider it to be very useful for the institution itself. Throughout the procedures the employees of the Agency were of great help, extremely approachable and responded to all of our questions and cleared up any ambiguities. Thanks to all the employees of the Agency who participated in the re-accreditation of our faculty, especially the coordinator.*

(source: official ASHE e-mail, anonymous survey)

Educational activities for higher education institutions

As part of the SKAZVO project "Improvement of quality assurance and enhancement systems in higher education," the Agency for Science and Higher Education held a series of workshops throughout 2018 for higher education institutions.

Workshop on learning outcomes

Workshops on learning outcomes for the representatives of higher education institutions, entitled "Workshop for higher education lecturers from the competent approach of study programme planning," were held on 4 May 2018 at the Faculty of Economics and Tourism "Dr. Mijo Mirković" in Pula on 15 July 2018 at the University of Dubrovnik and 20 September 2018 in Zagreb (for polytechnics and colleges).

Workshops led by prof. dr. sc. Vesna Vlahović Štetić i prof. dr. sc. Željka Kamenov, directed at lecturers and heads of study programmes who mainly through practical work had the opportunity to deal more closely with the subject of learning outcomes - from writing to evaluation, with an emphasis on evaluation and adaptation of content and teaching methods. They discussed the following thematic units: the competences and learning outcomes; constructive alignment, teaching methods and techniques; evaluation and grading;

ECTS credits and evaluation. The workshops were created within the project “Workshop for higher education lecturers from the competent approach of study programme planning”(SKAZVO).

Workshop on writing self-evaluation reports

The Agency for Science and Higher Education organized a workshop on writing self-evaluation reports on 10 October 2018 in Zagreb. The workshop brought together representatives of higher education institutions participating in the re-accreditation according to the 2019 Re-accreditation Plan. Participants learned more about the re-accreditation of higher education institutions and quality assessment and evaluation Standards of universities and components of universities as well as the MOZVAG information system.

Practical examples were also presented: prof. dr. sc. Marko Delimar of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing at the University of Zagreb explained how the procedure for re-accreditation from a higher education perspective looks like. The perspective of a member of the expert panel in the re-accreditation was spoken by izv. prof. dr. sc. Robert Basan from the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Rijeka. The Agency for Science and Higher Education has launched the ASHE QA forum “Quality in higher education” to enable higher education institutions to assist in conducting the re-accreditation. Questions and answers are available to everyone, thus enabling stakeholders to have a transparent and constructive discussion and to easily prepare a self-evaluation report. Each year, a new area is opened within the Forum for higher education institutions that are in the re-accreditation procedure.



Workshop on learning outcomes in Pula

Workshops on improve MOZVAG and CROSBI systems

For higher education institutions that were evaluated in 2018, as well as for those that will be evaluated in the first half of 2019, workshops were organized on the new MOZVAG 2 system for authorized system administrators at higher education institutions as well as additional workshops for Croatian administrators of scientific bibliographies and database administrators for data of project activities in science and higher education in Croatia(whose development is also through cooperation of ASHE and IRB).

Table 1: Overview of the number of participants from higher education institutions and topics that were discussed at the workshops

Date of the workshop	Location	Number of participants	Topics
22. 1. 2018.	IRB	27	CROSBI, Project database
06. 2. 2018.	University Computing Centre	26	MOZVAG 2, CROSBI, Projects database
28.3. 2018.	IRB	17	CROSBI, Project database
11. 12. 2018.	University Computing Centre	31	MOZVAG 2, CROSBI, Projects database

ASHE keeps record of authorized MOZVAG administrators. Communication and the exchange of opinions and experiences between ASHE, University Computing Centre(SRCE) and MOZVAG administrators at higher education institutions about the MOZAG system was made possible through the Quality Forum on the ASHE web site and via mozvag@azvo.hr email. Through the course of 2018, over 2,000 job inquiries were received in the MOZVAG system and in order to provide a more efficient solution to the users’ inquiries, the operation instructions on the Mozvag2 were updated, which are on the network pages of University Computing Centre (SRCE), which technically maintains the system. The instructions will continue to be updated according to the most frequent user inquiries.

Educational activities of employees of the Agency for Science and Higher Education

Brussels, 1-3.2.2018

Representatives of the Agency for Science and Higher Education participated in the seminar "Implementation of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes" in Brussels on the 1st and 2nd of March 2018 organized by ECA, ENQA and EQAR and the Polish Accreditation Committee (PKA). The seminar was held with the goal to become familiar with the document European Approach for QA of Joint Programmes, an introduction to the ImpEA project to exchange experiences from an evaluation of a joint programmes. The participants had the opportunity to exchange information on the implementation of the "European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes" in countries of the European higher education area.

Albania 22-23.3.2018

As part of the ESF project SKAZVO and the CEENQA Staff Exchange programme, the employees of the Agency for Science and Higher Education participated in the roles of observers on a two-day visit to the accreditation of the private higher education institution University College "Qiriaz" u Tirana, Albania 22nd to 23rd March 2018, conducted by the Albanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education-ASCAL University.

Tallinn 19-20.4.2018

Under the ESF project SKAZVO, the staff of the Agency for Science and Higher Education participated in the EURASHE Annual Conference "Partnership for a Digital Future-Strategic Role of Professional Higher Education for Society" in Tallinn from 19th to 20th April 2018. One of the main conclusions of the conference is that digitization in higher education is a pedagogical, curricular and organisation innovation whose main indicator of success is the cooperation between learning and teaching. Digital technology is not just a virtual area but it also changes the existing physical area for learning. The third generation of universities is emerging, far beyond the first two generations based on the practical application of knowledge. The conference also hosted a visit to the TTK University of Applied Sciences in Tallinn.

Brussels 16-18.5.2018

The ASHE employees participated in the programme ENQA Leadership Programme organized by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). The topics that were covered were related to quality assurance in higher education and good practices in agencies' countries. The topics of the lectures and presentations were: global trends in higher education, the development of European higher education, the higher education system in Belgium, higher education management, case study at the Dutch higher education institution.

The meeting within the programme was also held in Bern from 10 to 12 September 2018. The theme of the lectures was: nature of the university as an organisation, competences and values in management and organisational culture, management functions and organisational culture.

The last meeting in 2018, within this project, was held in Barcelona from 6 to 8 November 2018. The topics of the lectures and presentations were: quality assurance agencies in the national context, agency work and team management, and securing and strengthening the quality from a stakeholder perspective.

Madrid, 31.5. - 1.6. 2018

Assistant to the Director of ASHE, mr. sc. Sandra Bezjak, after the invitation of ENQA, took part in a two-day training in Madrid in May 2018. This training is organized by ENQA for European quality assurance specialists, thus becoming a review expert for the implementation of the international external evaluation of European agencies, which is being carried out to verify the compliance of these agencies with ESG (European Standards and Guidelines for QA in European Higher Education Area).

European agencies that successfully pass the external evaluation and demonstrate compliance with the ESG have the right to enrol/ extend membership in ENQA and EQAR.

Based on participation in KAA education, the ASHE representative also received a call for participation in the first external evaluation of Kosovo Accreditation Agency(KAA), which will be held in March 2019.

Vienna 15-17.11.2018

Within the framework of the SKAZVO project, ASHE has participated in the European Higher Education Quality Assurance Forum, which each year organizes E4 groups: the European University Association (EUA), the European Association for Quality Assurance in the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) the European Association of Institutes in Higher Education (EURASHE) and the European Student's Union (ESU). The Forum brings together students, colleges and agencies involved in ensuring the quality of higher education with the aim of becoming acquainted with novelties and networking.

Berlin, 10-11.12.2018

ASHE participated in the ASIIN Conference held in Berlin under the title "The drawing of a new era of higher education quality assurance-what can we expect from the future?" in the period from 10th to 11th December 2018. The conference discussed new ways of evaluating higher education institutions and study programmes through certification centres in cooperation with accreditation agencies. The participants presented examples of good practice and encouraged discussion of the advantages of such an evaluation.

Glasgow, 10.-11.12. 2018

Within the framework of the SKAZVO project, the employees of the Agency participated in the Workshop on QA of student-centered learning organized by ENQA. The host of the workshop was the QAA (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education) from Glasgow. The workshop discussed topics such as student-oriented learning and teaching from the perspective of quality assurance and how this process could look like in the future, what are the roles of institutions and agencies, the role of students in procedures is and how we can best make use of their contribution. At the end of the seminar, it was concluded that the importance of student participation in internal and external quality assurance is the main focus of the ESG, but their participation remains one of the weaker quality assurance areas across Europe.



European Higher Education Quality Assurance Forum in Vienna

Upgrading the information system to support the procedure for re-accreditation of higher education institutions

All higher education institutions in Croatia in the re-accreditation are obliged to enter information on their study programmes, subjects, teaching staff, projects and scientific productivity into the information system MOZVAG, maintained by the University Computing Centre and ASHE, as well as other data in accordance with the requirements of the re-accreditation procedure.

Based on MOZVAG data, there is also an updated Directory Study Programme available on the ASHE web site in Croatian and English. The Directory enables local and international public (potential students, international ENIC and NARIC offices, etc.) to access basic data on accredited programmes at Croatian higher education institutions.

In collaboration with University Computing Centre in 2018, the MOZVAG has been updated to include new and recent data needed for the conducting of the re-accreditation procedure. In the new procedure for re-accreditation, all quantitative data is collected through the upgrades MOZVAG (MOZVAG 2). The system has been successfully implemented in all 28 higher education institutions that have undergone a new re-accreditation procedure in 2018 as part of the 2018 Re-accreditation Plan. An analytical contribution from MOZVAG is an integral part of the self-evaluation of higher education institutions. In the MOZVAG 2 system, by the end of 2018, 165 documents were recorded (analytical annexes and contributions on the learning outcomes at the level of study programmes-in Croatian and English, and analysis of the performance conditions) which are the basis for the work of expert panels in the re-accreditation procedure as well as decision making of the Accreditation Council.

In cooperation with the Institute Ruder Bošković's scientific information centre (IRB), a module was developed in the Croatian scientific bibliography (CROSBI) for reporting within the re-accreditation of higher education institutions. Data on scientific publications can be obtained in the form of a report at the level of higher education institutions and at the level of each scientist and researcher.

Additionally, CROSBI developed, for the needs of the re-accreditation, the following updates:

- an editorial interface in such a way that higher education institutions have the oversight over the data on the works associated with the institution and / or the lecturer / researcher / employee and / or project of the institution;
- implementation of indexation data in databases such as the Web of Science Core Collection, Scopus and MEDLINE as well as the ability to filter / report on the productivity of a person / institution / project with respect to indexing of articles in which the work is published in the Web of Science Core Collection, Scopus and MEDLINE;
- possibility of entering data on the review of works published in articles, chapters in books, monographs and papers, and allowing for filtering / reporting on the productivity of a person / institution / project in relation to the criterion of the review of a particular work;
- additional reviews have been added in the scientific areas, i.e. analysis of the conditions in the Rulebook on selection criteria for scientific titles in relation to common elements and for the purpose of delivering data to the scientific area.

RE-ACCREDITATION OF UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE (DOCTORAL) STUDY PROGRAMMES

The re-accreditation of doctoral studies has prompted the findings of previous evaluations conducted by ASHE, as well as the thematic evaluation of 2013 and 2014. The aim of the re-accreditation of doctoral programmes is to ensure that higher education qualifications along with the titles of doctors and doctors of science, reflect high-quality study programmes that are internationally comparable and appreciated in the European space. By implementing this procedure, it will be ensured that all doctoral studies in Croatia meet the minimum quality threshold (i.e. the titles of doctors and doctors of science and arts), reflect the level of knowledge and skills.

In the year 2018, ASHE continued with the conducting of the re-accreditation of postgraduate (doctoral) university study programmes, which in the previous two years, at the request of the university and its components, and with the consent of the Accreditation Council, postponed this year. In this year, 16 doctoral study programmes were evaluated at 10 higher education institutions, and 32 members of the expert panels, mostly from overseas countries with prominent European and world institutions, participated in the procedure.

Also, in the previous year, the Accreditation Council issued 23 accreditation recommendations for re-accreditation of doctoral studies, out of

which 21 for the processes conducted in 2017 and 2 for the processes in 2018. By issuing the MSE’s decision on the basis of the accreditation recommendations, all the procedures for evaluation of doctoral studies began in 2017.

Following the conducting of the re-accreditation procedure for 6 study programmes, it was recommended to issue a confirmation on the fulfilment of conditions for performing the activities, and for 17 study programmes it was recommended to issue a letter of expectation with a deadline for removing the area’s that were lacking or unfinished. All final reports of expert panels and accreditation recommendations are published on the ASHE web site.

Evaluation of postgraduate university studies in 2018

In 2018, ASHE evaluated 16 postgraduate(doctoral)study programmes. Evaluations consisted largely of international members of expert panels.

Table 2: Evaluations of doctoral studies conducted in 2018

No.	Name of study programmes	Institution	Panel members
Clusters of natural and technical sciences			
1.	Geology	Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics of the University of Zagreb	21
2.	Chemistry	Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics of the University of Zagreb	
3.	Biology	Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics of the University of Zagreb	
4.	Oceanology	Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics of the University of Zagreb	
5.	Mathematics	University of Zagreb, Osijek, Rijeka, Split	
6.	University Department of Marine Sciences	University of Split and Dubrovnik	
7.	Environment Protection and Nature Conversation	Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek	
8.	Molecular Biosciences	Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek	
9.	Chemical Engineering and Applied Chemistry	Faculty of Chemical Engineering and Technology, University of Zagreb	
10.	Chemical Engineering in Materials Development and Environmental Protection	Faculty of Chemistry and Technology University of Split	
11.	Environmental Chemistry of Mediterranean	Faculty of Chemistry and Technology University of Split	
12.	Mining, Geology, Petroleum Engineering	Faculty of Mining, Geology and Petroleum Engineering, University of Zagreb	
Clusters Biomedicine and Biosciences			
13.	Biophysics	Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics University of Split	6
14.	Biomedicine and health	Faculty of Medicine Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek	

No.	Name of study programmes	Institution	Panel members
15.	Medical chemistry	Department of Biotechnology University of Rijeka	6
Clusters interdisciplinary sciences			
16.	Adriatic-a link between continents	University of Zadar	5

Review of members of expert panels in re-accreditation of postgraduate university studies in 2018

Growth of natural and technical sciences:

1. Professor Mark Davies, Sunderland University, United Kingdom
2. Professor Matthias Senge, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland
3. Professor R. J. Pieters, Utrecht University, Netherlands
4. Fabian Cerda, Max Planck Institute of Biochemistry, Germany
5. Professor Marianne Holmer, Syddansk University, Denmark
6. Professor Isabel Sa Nogueira, University Nova de Lisboa, Portugal
7. Dr. Inger Elisabeth Maren, University of Bergen, Norway
8. Dr. Peter Bennett, University of Kent, United Kingdom
9. Domagoj Vugić, PhD, Curie Institute, France
10. Professor Maalte Braack, Christian-Albrechts-University, Germany
11. Professor Barbara Drinovec Drnosek, University in Ljubljana, Slovenia
12. Sebastian Eterovic, PhD, University of Oxford, United Kingdom
13. Professor Donald Bruce Dingwell, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, Germany
14. Professor Giovanni B. Andreozzi, Sapienza University of Rome, Italy
15. Pontiff Roy Bitrus, PhD, University of Aberdeen, United Kingdom
16. Professor emeritus Anders Omstedt, University of Gothenburg, Sweden
17. Rafael Laso Perez, PhD, Max Planck Institute for Marine Microbiology, Germany
18. Professor Kai-Olaf Hinrichsen, Technical University Munchen, Germany
19. Professor Alexandra Pinto, University of Porto, Portugal
20. Mohamed Hussien, PhD, L. M. University Munchen, Germany
21. Professor Mikael Rinne, Aalto University, Finland.

Cluster of biomedical and bioscience:

1. Professor Gernot Riedel, University of Aberdeen, United Kingdom
2. Professor Michael Drinnan, University of Newcastle, United Kingdom
3. Professor Justin McCarthy, University College Cork, Ireland
4. Dr. Dorte Gilså Hansen, Syddansk University, Denmark
5. Giovanni Marco Nocera, PhD, Max Planck Institute, Germany
6. Massimiliano Ferrucci, PhD, KU Leuven, Belgium.

Cluster of Interdisciplinary Science:

- 1. Professor Alenka Tomaž University Primorska, Slovenia
- 2. Professor Walter Panciera, University of Padua, Italy
- 3. Professor Zrinka Mileusnić, University Primorska, Slovenia
- 4. Professor Laura Šakaja, Faculty of Science, University of Zagreb, Croatia
- 5. Mišo Petrović, Ph.D., Central European University, Hungary

Re-accreditation Plan for doctoral studies in 2019

In 2019, ASHE plans to evaluate the remaining 35 doctoral programmes in social, artistic, humanistic and interdisciplinary sciences, religious sciences and philosophy, socio-legal sciences, cognitive and rehabilitative sciences and natural, technical and economic sciences.

The detailed plan for 2019, with deadlines submitted by self-evaluation and clusters, was published on ASHE's pages and sent to the executives and programme holders.

Table 3: Operational plan for re-accreditation of doctoral studies in 2019

No.	Name of study programme	Institution
Cluster of social sciences II		
1.	Cultural Studies	Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek
2.	European studies	Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek
3.	Law	Faculty of Law Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek
4.	International relations	University of Zadar and DIU Libertas
5.	Communication studies	Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek (University of Dubrovnik)
Cluster of art sciences		
6.	Ethnomusicology	Art Academy University of Split
Cluster of humanistic, social and interdisciplinary sciences		
7.	Doctoral studies in literature, performing arts, musicology, film and cultural studies	Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb
8.	Croatian Philology in an intercultural environment	Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb
9.	Premodern history	Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb
10.	Modern and contemporary Croatian history in the European and world context	Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb

No.	Name of study programme	Institution
11.	New paradigms of education	University of Juraj Dobrila in Pula
12.	Quality in upbringing and education	University of Zadar
13.	Lifelong learning and education science	Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb
14.	Research in education in the field of natural and technical sciences	Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics University of Split
15.	History of the population (joint study)	University of Zagreb and University of Dubrovnik
Cluster of art sciences		
16.	Painting	Academy of Fine Arts, University of Zagreb
17.	Statuary	Academy of Fine Arts, University of Zagreb
18.	Graphics	Academy of Fine Arts, University of Zagreb
Cluster of social sciences		
19.	Doctoral study of sociology	Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb
20.	Sociology of regional and local development (joint study)	University of Zadar and University of Teramo
Cluster of religious sciences and philosophy		
21.	Licentiate and Doctoral Study of Theology	Catholic Faculty of Theology University of Zagreb
22.	Philosophy	Centre for Croatian Studies University of Zagreb
Cluster of social (legal) sciences		
23.	Human rights, society and multilevel reform (joint study)	University of Padua (host), University of Western Sydney (Australia), Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens (Greece), University of Nicosia (Cyprus)
24.	Seafarers Rights and Maritime Law	Faculty of Law in Split
Cluster of interdisciplinary cognitive and rehabilitation sciences, language and cognitive neuroscience		
25.	Language and cognitive neuroscience	Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb
26.	Disorders of language, speech and hearing	Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences University of Zagreb
Cluster of natural and interdisciplinary science		
27.	Physics	Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics of the University of Zagreb
28.	Doctoral study of geography: space, religion, environment and landscape	Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics of the University of Zagreb

No.	Name of study programme	Institution
29.	Physics	University of Rijeka, Department of Physics
Cluster of technical sciences		
30.	Postgraduate university (doctoral) study from the scientific field of technical sciences, scientific field of computer science	Faculty of Engineering University of Rijeka
31.	Environmental Engineering	Faculty of Geotechnics, University of Zagreb
Cluster economic sciences		
32.	International Economic Relations and Management (joint study)	University of Juraj Dobrila in Pula, Szenchenyi Istvan University/University of West Hungary, Sopron, University of Economics in Bratislava, Burgenland College and University North
33.	Economy and global security	Faculty of Economics, University of Zagreb
Cluster of educational and communication sciences		
34.	Media and communication	University North
35.	Educational and communication sciences	University of North, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia and International Bruch University, Bosnia and Herzegovina with administrative partnership with Burgenland College

FOLLOW - UP PROCEDURES IN RE-ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The Follow-up committee is the advisory body of the ASHE Accreditation Council in order to provide expert assistance to the Accreditation Council on all follow-up questions in the case when a higher education institution or scientific organisation after the re-accreditation is issued a certificate of meeting all the standards for conducting higher education or scientific activities. If necessary, the Committee provides expert assistance to the Accreditation council on all follow up questions and other external evaluations.

In 2018, the Committee issued 48 opinions in follow up-procedures, 23 opinions for doctoral studies and 25 opinions for public scientific institutes. The accreditation council adopted the above-mentioned opinions.

INITIAL ACCREDITATION

Initial accreditation of study programmes

In 2018, the Agency conducted procedures for initial accreditation of study programmes under Article 20 of the Law on Quality Assurance in

Science and Higher Education (OG 45/09) and Articles 15 and 16 of the Ordinance on the Content of License and Conditions for Issuance of Licenses for Performing Activities in higher education, the implementation of the study programmes and the re-accreditation of higher education institutions(OG 24/2010).

The procedures consist of checking the compliance of study programmes with the strategic documents of the higher education institution Network, the examination of received documentation, the visit of the expert panel of higher education institutions, the administrative and professional support of ASHE during visits to higher education institutions, the preparation of the final report and conclusion of the Accreditation recommendations.

In the past year, ASHE received thirteen applications to launch the initial accreditation for conducting new study programmes proposed by polytechnics, colleges and private universities.

Based on the initial accreditation procedures conducted in 2018, it was recommended to the Ministry to issue a permit for eight study programmes: three undergraduate professional study programmes and five specialists' graduate professional studies.

Three applications for launching new study programmes have received a negative recommendation from the Accreditation Council, and two procedures are still underway.

The study programmes for which the higher education institutions have requested the launch of the initial accreditation are positioned in the social field (five study programmes), technical field (three study programmes), art fields (two study programmes), biotechnology (two study programmes), and biomedicine and health care (one study programme).

Initial accreditation for performing scientific activities

ASHE carries out the initial accreditation for performing scientific activities, i.e. the establishment of scientific organisation or the entry of existing scientific organisation into the Register of Scientific Organisations in new areas of science.

Initial accreditation for carrying out scientific activities includes a review of the received documentation, the visit of the expert panel to the scientific organisation, the preparation of the final report and the issuance of an accreditation recommendation. In 2018, seven applications for initial accreditation of scientific activity were received and resolved.

JUSTIFIABILITY OF PUBLIC FUNDING OF NEW STUDY PROGRAMMES

Public university study programmes are established and implemented by a university senate decision based on a previous assessment of the unit for the internal system of quality assurance and improvement.

In accordance with the provision of Article 20, paragraph 10 of the Law on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (OG 45/09), the Agency has given its opinion on the justification for financing the study programmes of public universities from the State budget for all applications received (independent of whether they requested additional funds from the state budget or not). By decision of the Ministry of Science and Education on 23.07.2018. In order to speed up the process and reduce the unnecessary administrative burden, the Ministry will in the future send by e-mail to ASHE the justification of public funding only for programmes for which public universities require additional funds. Other study programmes of public universities will be solved by the Ministry, and enter them into the Register of study programmes after verifying the content of the submitted documentation without requiring additional verifications from the Agency.

Based on the requests received on 23.07.2018, the Agency issued 28 positive opinions (13 on compliance with the Network and 15 on the justifiability of public funding).

After 23.07.2018, the Ministry registered 19 public university study programmes into the Register of Study Programmes on the basis of their own review and verification.

AUDIT OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

After the first cycle of audit (2010–2016), ASHE conducted an analysis of procedure's relevance and impact on the development of quality culture and strengthening of internal quality assurance systems at higher education institutions. New audit model was developed by taking into account the results of analyses carried out, the revised ESG (2015), analysis of recent audit models in Europe and beyond, and the national context. During 2017, ASHE adopted the new Ordinance on external quality assurance audit of higher education institutions in the Republic of Croatia and Criteria for audit, which are available on ASHE website.

Pilot audit

At its 89th session held on 24 October 2017, ASHE's Accreditation Council adopted the plan for pilot audit of 3 higher education institutions: Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Food Technology and Biotechnology, University of Zagreb, and University College Algebra.

A workshop was organised for the representatives of the higher education institutions on 7 November 2017. The participants assessed the quality of the workshop with an average grade of 4.9/5.

Site visits to the evaluated institutions were carried out during March and April (University of Zagreb Faculty of Veterinary Medicine: 22–23 March; University of Zagreb Faculty of Food Technology and Biotechnology: 27–28 March; University College Algebra: 5–6 April).

Final reports – after being accepted by the evaluated higher education institutions – were adopted at the 97th session of the Accreditation Council on 19 June 2018.

The procedures were carried out without complaints, and final assessments of the evaluated QAS are presented in the table below.

Table 4: Final assessments of the evaluated QAS

Higher education institution	Elements of evaluation: Quality policy	Elements of evaluation: Planning and management	Elements of evaluation: Implementation and monitoring	Elements of evaluation: Evaluation	Elements of evaluation: Improvements, innovations, impact
FVM UNIZG	Developed phase	Developed phase	Developed phase	Developed phase	Developed phase
FFTB UNIZG	Developed phase	Developed phase	Developed phase	Developed phase	Developed phase
ALGEBRA	Advanced phase	Advanced phase	Advanced phase	Advanced phase	Advanced phase

Since all three evaluated institutions met the required criteria for certification (each element of evaluation being in at least a developed phase of development), the Agency awarded them with a 5-year certificate for a developed internal quality assurance system.

Each final report also contains recommendations for improvement, by individual elements of evaluation. In accordance with the audit procedure, each evaluated institution produced and submitted a 2-year action plan of improvements, to be monitored during the follow up period.

Upon the completion of the pilot audit, feedback was collected from expert panels and evaluated higher education institutions on their satisfaction with the procedure, including their recommendations for its improvement. The stakeholders gave a positive feedback on the new procedure and criteria for audit (the panels assessed it with an average grade of 4.3/5, and HEIs with 4.7/5). Recommended improvements include more detailed indicators by individual criteria, which could help in determining the level of internal QAS development.

New cycle of audits

At its 100th session held on 20 November 2018, ASHE's Accreditation Council adopted the Annual audit plan for 2019, which includes the following institutions:

1. Dag Hammarskjöld College of International Relations and Diplomacy
2. Edward Bernays College of Communication Management
3. Business College PAR
4. Polytechnic of Rijeka.

On 11 December 2018, ASHE organised a workshop for the representatives of these institutions. In addition to the new and revised ESG(2015), on which the second cycle of external evaluations is based, participants were also informed on the new audit model and the new criteria by which their institutions will be evaluated in 2019.

The participants assessed the quality of the workshop with an average grade of 4.8/5.

CROQANET

Support to internal quality assurance systems at Croatian higher education institutions is one of the most important aspects of Agency's operation. During 2018, this was also achieved through CroQAnet network (network of QA units at HEIs), a national platform for the exchange of knowledge and good practices in the area of higher education quality assurance, established by ASHE.

In 2018, the Agency organised two CroQAnet meetings.

The main topic of the fourth biannual meeting, held in May 2018, was the optimisation of internal quality assurance system. Participants were introduced to the ways in which QA units can improve the overall QAS efficiency, information on how to improve internal communication within higher education institutions, how to prioritise IQAS goals and objectives, and define key issues and relevant stakeholders for an efficient institutional communication.



4th meeting of CroQAnet network, 30 May 2018

Fifth meeting of the CroQAnet network was held on 20 December 2018 in Zagreb; discussions included the methods and mechanisms of quality assurance in complex systems and organisations, and the possibilities of their application in higher education. The impact of internal and external evaluations on institutional quality was also discussed on a case of one higher education institution.

Analysis of internal quality assurance systems at croatian HEIs

In May 2018, ASHE collected information on the internal quality assurance systems of Croatian higher education institutions, particularly focusing on whether the institutions have basic QA documentation (regulations and manual), and whether they conduct internal audits.

Obtained information is presented in the charts below:

Table 5: Basic indicators of QAS at Croatian universities

Name of the University	Full title of QA regulations document	Full title of QA manual	Internal audit carried out	Audit report
DIU Libertas International University	Ordinance on quality assurance and improvement	Quality Assurance Manual	Yes	Yes
Croatian Catholic University	Regulations on Quality Assurance System	Quality Assurance System Manual	No	No
University of Dubrovnik	Ordinance on internal system of quality assurance and improvement	Quality Assurance Manual	Yes	Yes
Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek	Ordinance on the quality assurance system University of J. J. Strossmayer in Osijek	Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek Quality Manual	Yes	Yes
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula	Ordinance on the Quality Assurance and Improvement System at the University of Juraj Dobrila in Pula	University of Juraj Dobrila in Pula Quality Manual	Yes	Yes
University of Rijeka	Ordinance on the Quality Assurance and Improvement System at the University of Rijeka	University of Rijeka - Manual for Quality Studying	Yes	Yes
University North	Regulations on Quality Assurance System	Quality Assurance Manual	Yes	No
University of Split	Regulations on the Quality Assurance System at the University of Split	Quality Assurance Handbook of the University of Split	Yes	Yes

Name of the University	Full title of QA regulations document	Full title of QA manual	Internal audit carried out	Audit report
University of Zadar	Ordinance on the Quality Assurance and Improvement System at the University of Zadar	Manual of Quality at the University of Zadar	Yes	Yes
University of Zagreb	Ordinance on the Quality Assurance System at the University of Zagreb	University of Zagreb Quality Assurance Manual	Yes	Yes

Basic indicators of QAS at polytechnics

In 2018, 15 polytechnics participated in ASHE survey of institutional quality assurance systems. Obtained data is presented in the charts below:

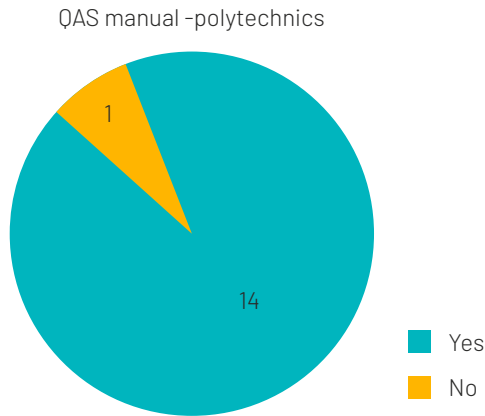


Chart 1: Adopted QA manuals at the level of polytechnics, 2018

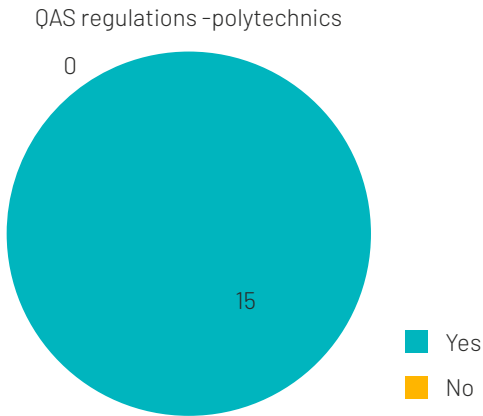


Chart 2: Adopted QA regulations at polytechnics, 2018

Internal audit report -polytechnics

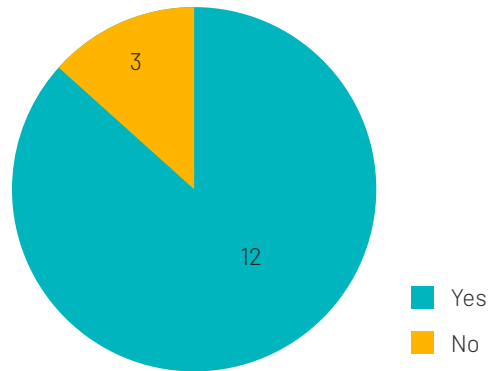


Chart 3: Internal audit reports at the level of polytechnics, 2018

Basic indicators of QAS at colleges

In 2018, 24 colleges participated in ASHE survey of institutional quality assurance systems. Obtained data is presented in the charts below:

QAS regulations -colleges

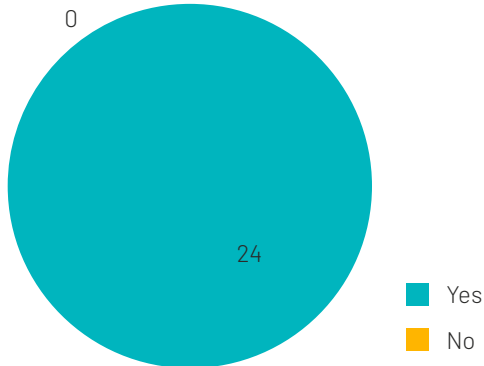


Chart 4: Adopted QA regulations at colleges, 2018

QAS manuals -colleges

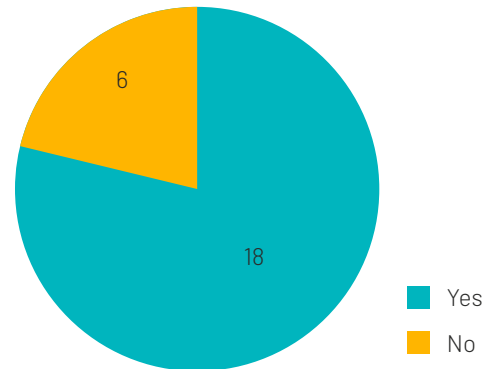


Chart 5: Adopted QA manuals at the level of colleges, 2018

Internal audit report - colleges

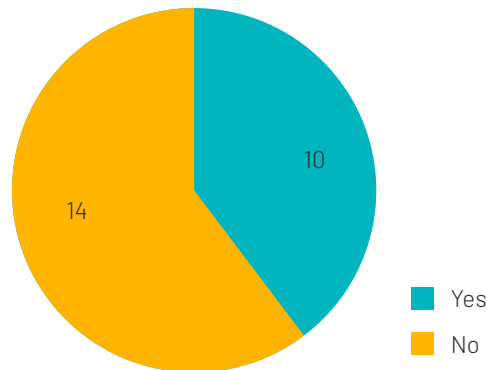


Chart 6: Internal audit reports at the level of colleges, 2018

DEVELOPMENT OF MODELS FOR COMPARASION OF ACADEMIC QUALITY

The Agency for Science and Higher Education, in addition to the external evaluation of the quality of higher education institutions in accordance with the existing legal framework, also participates in the publication of other modalities of its valuations. In cooperation with Croatian researchers that are active in that field, the model of comparison of academic quality, the classification and academic ranking on the national level is being developed. In the framework of the existing process, data meta-analysis, operations of the outcomes of the process were developed and a methodology for evaluation the effects of the procedures for external quality evaluation carried out by ASHE on the work of individual higher education institutions and the national higher education system.

In cooperation with the scientific community in research projects, ASHE has organized study visits by Dr. Romina Miorelli and Alex Usher, experts for academic classification and ranking. During this visit, intensive consultations were conducted with stakeholders in the context of the application of the classification and the ranking process in the Croatian higher education system.

The current research that ASHE focuses on is on one hand the interaction of external and internal quality assurance at the level of higher education and on the other hand, on the impact of external quality evaluation on transformations on the national higher education system. Within these topics, visits were organized for Dr. Karl Ledermueller and Phillip Keller (University Vienna), Anthony Camilleri (Knowledge Innovation Centre, Malta) and prof. dr. sc. Ines Dužević (Faculty of Economics, University of Zagreb).

2

ASHE'S SUPPORT TO STRATEGIC AND PROFESSIONAL BODIES
IN THE SYSTEM OF SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION

ASHE provides professional and administrative support to the work of the National Council for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development, the Council of Polytechnics and Colleges, the field committees and the Committee for Ethics in Science and Higher Education. All this is an added value as it enables the collection and linking of various information and data related to the improvement of quality assurance in the system of higher education in Croatia.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE, HIGHER EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

As in previous years, and in 2018, ASHE was concerned about the quality functioning of the National Council for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development (NCSHETD), the highest professional body responsible for the development and quality of the overall scientific activity and the system of science, higher education and technological development in Croatia.

In accordance with this, ASHE has administratively and professionally supported the work of NCSHETD in terms of preparation of materials and information required for sessions, writing of minutes, recommendations, statements, decisions and conclusions related to the Action Plan of the Education, Science and Development Strategy on quality assurance of higher education institutions and scientific organisations, mid-term evaluations, annual reports I of groups of scientific centres of excellence, annual reports II of scientific centres of excellence, the proposal of an integrated undergraduate and graduate study, proposals for conducting online studies, proposals for approval of conducting professional studies at universities, passing opinions of the fulfilment of the teaching excellence criteria for the extension of the employment contract (65+), the ability to carry out the part of the appointment to teaching grades or the artistic component of artistic-teaching grades in 2018, giving the proposals to the ASHE Accreditation Council, information on the method and results of international ranking of the university, annual reports on the activities of NCSHETD for 2016 and 2017, and giving other opinions, thoughts, recommendations and approvals etc.

During 2018, three sessions were held as well as one meeting of the members of the Council with their mandate. Also, meetings were held for the expert work groups and expert panels such as: expert panels for the Draft Proposal of the Act on the Evaluation of the Quality of Institutions of Higher Education and Scientific Organisations, expert for opinions on the fulfilment of teaching excellence criteria for the extension of the employment contract (65+) and the Croatian Commission for Monitoring the Bologna Process and the Croatian Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures.

REGIONAL SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL AND ART COUNCIL

The task of the area councils is to take part in the discussion of the issues within the competences of NCSHETD, related to certain scientific and artistic areas. Of the seven sessions of the area councils held in 2018, one session was held by the Regional Science Council for Natural Sciences, one session of the Regional Scientific Committee for Biomedicine and health and five sessions were held by the Regional Scientific Panel for Humanities.

SCIENTIFIC FIELD COMMITTEES

Last year, the Board of the scientific field committees with tasks related to supporting of the work of the 22 scientific field committees that participate in appointing scientific grades and artistic teaching grades, carried out the process for determining criteria for scientific/artistic excellence in the selection for the conclusion of employment contracts for employees over the age of 65.

During 2018, a total of 111 sessions were held, with a total of 1519 decisions passed, of which 1497 (98.55%) were positive and 22 (1.45%) were negative.

According to the data it was concluded that the largest number of decisions on the appointment of scientific grades passed by the scientific field committee was for the area of biomedicine and health- fields of fundamental medical sciences, clinical medical sciences, public health and health protection, dentistry and pharmacy (16.66% of the total number of procedures), followed by the scientific field committee for social sciences-field of economics (9.02% of the total number of procedures), as well as the scientific field committee for biotechnical sciences- field of agriculture, forestry, wood technology, biotechnology, food technology and nutrition (7.97% of the total number of procedures performed).

The number of appointments to scientific grades upon individual request or request of a scientific institution in 2018 was 1096 (72.15%) while those implemented on the basis of a public call amounted to 423 in the proposed scientific grades (27.85%).

According to the data on all the procedures and for all the scientific field committees in 2018, there was a total of 580 appointments of scientific associates, 440 senior scientific associates, 269 scientific advisors and 120 scientific advisors with tenure.

The Scientific Field Committee for Arts-fields of dramatic arts(theatre and media), film arts (film, electronic and media art of motion pictures), music art, visual art, applied arts, dance art and art of movement-confirmed appointment to scientific and artistic teaching grades for 42 assistant professors, 15 associate professors, 18 full time professors and 14 full professors with tenure.

Within the procedures of determining criteria for scientific/artistic excellence in the framework procedures for the conclusion of employment contracts after the age of 65, the scientific field committees have in 2018 issued 29 positive decisions (11 in the field of arts) and 1 negative decision on meeting the criteria for scientific excellence. The data shows the equal representation of the genders in the conducted procedures for all scientific committees. The data shows an equal representation of genders in conducted procedures for all scientific committee however with a slightly lower ratio of female applicants.

Table 6: Procedures held and results in the scientific field committees in 2018

Scientific field committee	No. of sess. held	Excellence criteria	Positive decisions				Negative decisions				Total positive	Total negative	Total
			Research associate	Senior research associate	Research advisor	Research advisor with tenure	Research associate	Senior research associate	Research advisor	Research advisor with tenure			
SFC Biology	5	0	26	13	11	4	1	0	0	0	54	1	55
SFC Physics	4	0	16	10	10	4	0	0	0	0	40	0	40

Scientific field committee	No. of sess. held	Excellence criteria	Positive decisions				Negative decisions				Total positive	Total negative	Total
			Research associate	Senior research associate	Research advisor	Research advisor with tenure	Research associate	Senior research associate	Research advisor	Research advisor with tenure			
SFC Geology	5	0	13	13	9	1	1	0	0	0	36	1	37
SFC Chemistry	6	0	17	10	9	2	0	0	0	0	38	0	38
SFC Mathematics	4	0	15	9	5	2	0	0	0	0	31	0	31
SFC Architecture, Urbanism, Geodesy and Civil Engineering	4	1+1 neg	15	12	3	0	0	0	0	0	30	0	30
SFC Electrical Engineering and Computing	4	1	35	27	19	3	0	0	0	0	84	0	84
SFC Chemical Engineering, Mining, Geology and Petroleum Engineering, Metallurgy, Textile Tech., Graphic Technology	7	1	11	8	9	1	0	0	0	0	29	0	29
SFC Mechanical Engineering, Shipbuilding, Traffic and Transport Technology, Aviation, Rocket and Space Technology	5	1	30	19	18	16	0	0	0	0	83	0	83
SFC Fundamental Medical Sciences, Clinical Medical Sciences, Public Health and Health Protection, Dentistry and Pharmacy	7	6	132	63	45	13	3	0	0	0	253	3	256
SFC Veterinary Medicine	3	0	7	4	5	15	1	0	0	0	31	1	32
SFC Agricultural Sciences, Forestry, Wood Technology, Biotechnology, Food Technology and Nutrition	4	0	21	37	25	38	0	0	0	0	121	0	121
SFC Economics	6	1	44	61	30	2	0	0	1	0	137	0	138

Scientific field committee	No. of sess. held	Excellence criteria	Positive decisions				Negative decisions				Total positive	Total negative	Total
			Research associate	Senior research associate	Research advisor	Research advisor with tenure	Research associate	Senior research associate	Research advisor	Research advisor with tenure			
SFC Information and Communication Sciences	4	0	25	18	7	0	1	0	0	0	50	1	51
SFC Pedagogy, Educational and Rehabilitation Sciences, Logopedics and Kinesiology	5	1	19	19	8	0	1	0	2	0	46	3	49
SFC Political Science, Sociology, Demography, Social Work and Security and Defence	5	3	7	18	5	6	0	2	0	0	36	2	38
SFC Law	3	0	9	13	6	0	0	0	0	0	28	0	28
SFC Psychology	5	0	20	12	2	2	1	0	0	0	36	1	37
SFC Philosophy and Theology	6	1	19	8	2	0	0	0	0	0	29	0	29
SFC Philology	5	1	38	27	13	4	1	0	0	0	82	1	83
SFT History, Art History, Art Science, Archaeology, Ethnology and Anthropology	4	1	28	19	16	6	1	0	0	0	69	1	70
SFC Interdisciplinary Field	6	0	33	20	12	1	0	0	0	0	66	0	66
TOTAL	107	18+1 neg.	580	440	269	120	11	2	3	0	1409	16	1425

Table 7: Number of conducted procedures and results of artistic teaching grades by scientific field committees in 2018

Name of department	No. of sessions	Excellence criteria	Positive decisions				Negative decisions				Total		
			Assistant professor	Associate professor	Full professor	Full professor with tenure	Assistant professor	Associate professor	Full professor	Full professor with tenure	Total positive	Total negative	Total
SFC Arts	4	11	42	15	18	13	5	0	1	0	88	6	94

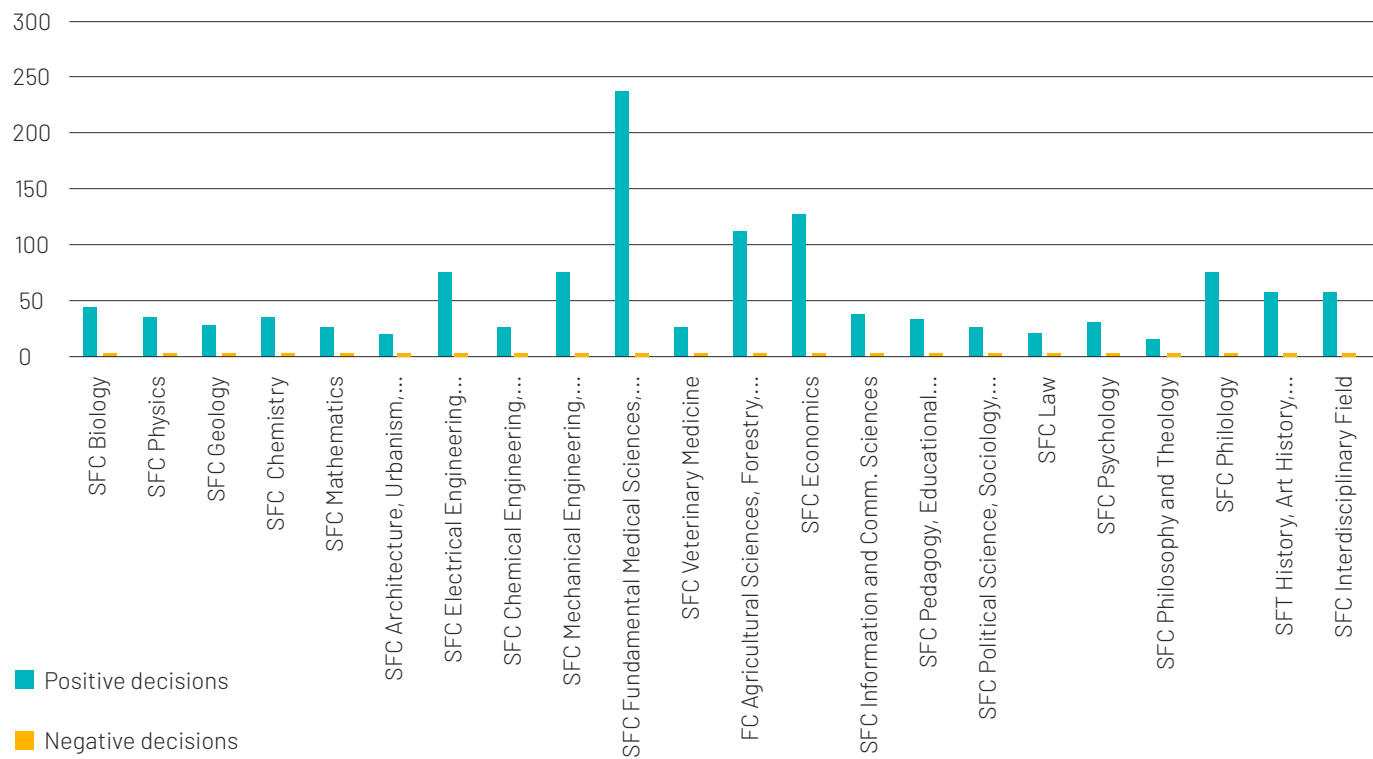


Chart 7: Total number of decisions made by scientific field committees in the appointment to scientific grades in 2018

THE COUNCIL OF POLYTECHNICS AND COLLEGES

The Council of Polytechnics and Colleges is a body in charge of decision-making on the issues of common interest for the activities and development of polytechnics and colleges. Its members are deans of all polytechnics and colleges in Croatia. A representative of the Rectors' Conference participates in the work of the Council without voting rights, along with a representative of the Council of students of polytechnics and colleges. The Council of Polytechnics and Colleges currently comprises 38 members, of which 17 are polytechnics and 21 colleges. From the total number of members, 14 institutions are public and 24 are private.

ASHE organised four sessions of the Council of Polytechnics and Colleges in 2018.

In terms of international cooperation, the Council of Polytechnics and Colleges, being a member of the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), is partner in two Erasmus+ projects: Building Professional Higher Education Capacity (BuildPHE) and Strengthening Professional Higher Education and vocational education and training in Central and South-Eastern Europe (PROCSEE), initiated at the end of 2015, aimed at development and strengthening of professional higher education in the European Higher Education Area. The project is in the final stages, and on a conference, was organised in November, where the results of the project were presented during the workshop and round table discussion on the topic "Harmonising and contributing to higher education with national, regional and local development strategies (with a special emphasis on the depopulation trend).

The representatives of the Council are actively involved in the work of numerous committees and working groups established for the purpose of drafting regulations and developing the system of higher education.



Final conference of the PROCSEE Project

FIELD COMMITTEES

Field committees of the Council of Polytechnics and Colleges have in the 2018 held 28 sessions, passing a total of 344 positive decisions on the fulfilment of criteria for appointment to teaching grades.

In that period, the Field Committee for Humanities passed the highest number of positive opinions (165), followed by the Field Committee for Technical Sciences with 81 positive opinions as well as the Field Committee for Biomedicine and Health with 32 positive opinions. The scientific field committee for the field of technical sciences passed one positive opinion in the process of confirming the criteria for teaching excellence.

The highest number of positive opinions in the procedures of appointment to teaching grades was passed in the field of Economics with 101 positive opinions followed by the field of information and communication sciences with 27 positive opinions and the field of Clinical Medicine Science with 25 positive opinions.

The teaching grade that resulted in the highest number of positive opinions in all scientific fields is the teaching grade for lecturers, which in 2018 resulted in 184 positive opinions, and the lowest number of positive opinions was for the teaching grade for tenured college professors – 31 positive opinions.

During 2018, a session for the Committee for coordinating the work of field committees and with the passing of the interpretation of the appointment to teaching grades of the members of the Council of Polytechnics and colleges, a positive opinion was made in the procedures of appointment in interdisciplinary fields of science.

Table 8: Number of positive opinions in the procedures of appointment to teaching grades for field committees in 2018*

Field Committee	Social Sciences	Technical Sciences	Humanities	Natural Sciences	Biotechnical sciences	Biomedicine and health	Arts	Total
Number of sessions	6	5	4	4	4	4	1	28
Number of opinions	165	81	14	23	21	32	8	344
Tenured college professors	17	6	2	2	4	8	0	39
College professors	16	7	1	3	1	3	0	31
Senior lecturers	45	19	3	8	7	8	0	90
Lecturers	87	49	8	10	9	13	8	184

*The data does not include the number of amendments and negative opinions passed at the sessions.

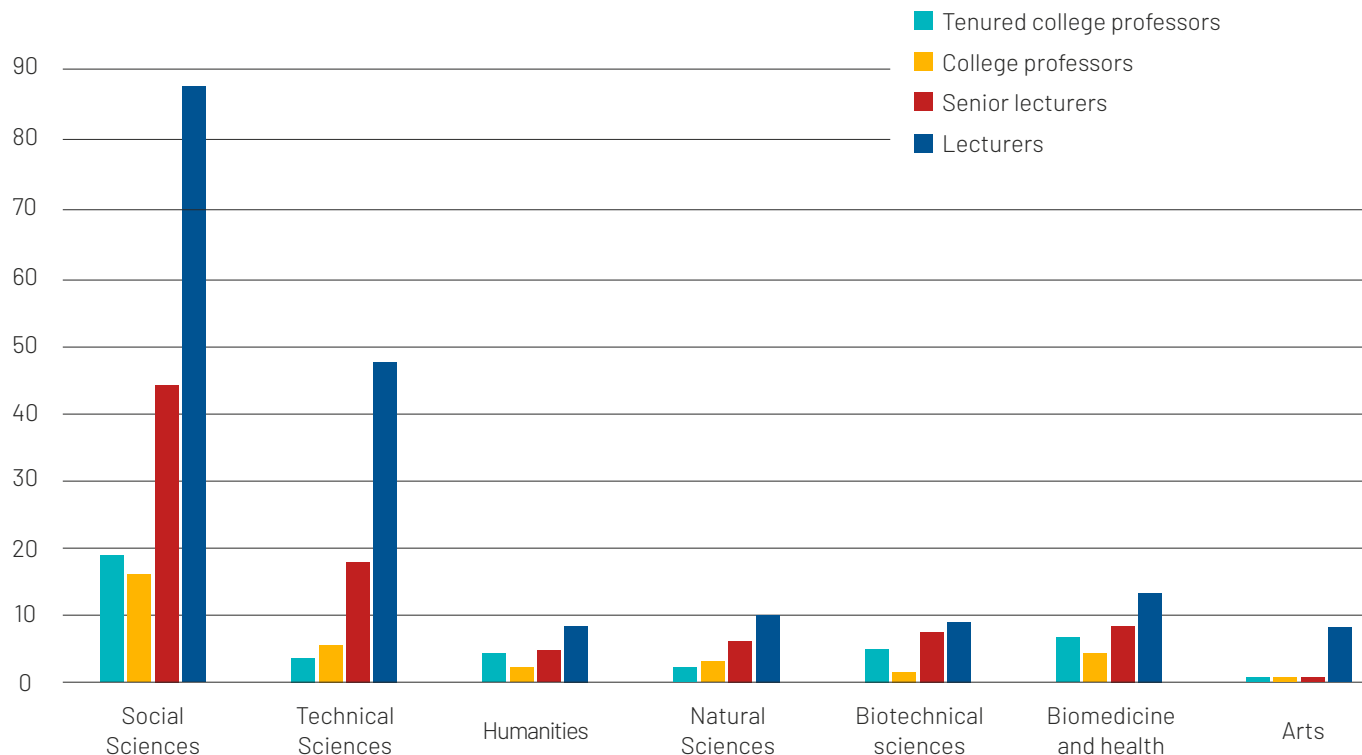


Chart 8: Positive opinions of field committees in 2018

THE COMMITTEE FOR ETHICS IN SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION

The Committee for Ethics in Science and Higher Education is the most prominent advisory and professional body for the promotion of ethical principles and values in science and higher education, business, public relations, application of modern technology, and environmental protection.

The Committee for Ethics in Science and Higher Education held 5 regular sessions in 2018.

On March 22, 2018 a letter was sent to the Ministry of Science and Education with the purpose of initiating the procedure for the appointment of new members of the Committee (mandate of members expired on 6 June 2018).

The report on the annual work of The Committee for Ethics, in alignment with the Act on Scientific Activity and Higher Education, is referred to the Croatian Parliament.

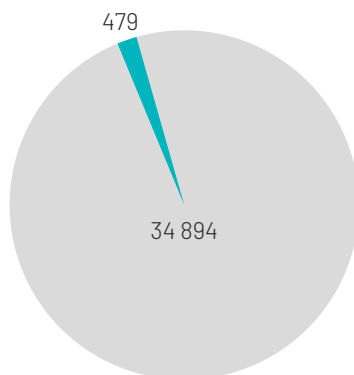
3

APPLICATIONS TO STUDY PROGRAMMES IN CROATIA

APPLICATIONS TO UNDERGRADUATE AND INTEGRATED STUDY PROGRAMMES

Applications to undergraduate and integrated study programmes in the summer enrolment period began on the 1st of February and lasted until the 16th July 2018, when the final ranking lists for enrolment into study programmes were announced. At the moment when ranking lists for the summer enrolment period were made public, a total of 34,894 candidates had made an application to study programmes, of which 26,918 secured their right to enrol. Central Applications Office(CAO)received and processed documents from 346 candidates, of whom 133 completed their secondary education outside of Croatia. Processing those applications included filing documents, making sure that the documentation is valid and complete, thoroughly checking and verifying candidates' personal data and grades entered into the system. In the autumn application period, which lasted from 20th July until 19th September 2018, 7,235 candidates applied for admission to higher education at the time of the publication of the ranking, and 4,453 secured their right to enrol in the autumn period. CAO received and processed 156 candidates' documents, of whom 36 finished their secondary education outside of Croatia.

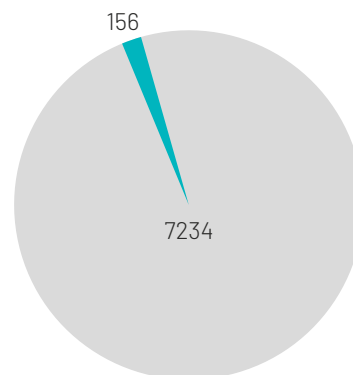
Chart 9: Number of applicants in the summer enrolment period



■ Total number of applicants

■ Number of applicant that need to be manually entered into NISPVU

Chart 10: Number of applicants in the autumn enrolment period



■ Total number of applicants

■ Number of applicant that need to be manually entered into NISPVU

CAO also received 133 substantiated requests for advanced enrolment, and entered the 107 valid ones into the system.

In the summer enrolment period, there were 39,346 slots available at Croatian higher education institutions. Out of the total of 34,894 candidates, 26,918 candidates or 77.14% secured their right to enrol in a study programme, and 2,029 or 5.81% did not secure the right to enrol in any study programme. CAO recorded 165,394 applications to study programmes or 4.73 applications per candidate.

In the autumn enrolment period, there were 13,807 slots left at higher education institutions. Out of the 7,235 candidates who competed for enrolment, 4,453 or 61.55% secured their right to enrol, and 1,158 or 16% did not secure the right to enrol in any study programme in the autumn period.

CAO recorded 24,330 applications to study programmes or 3.36 applications per candidate.

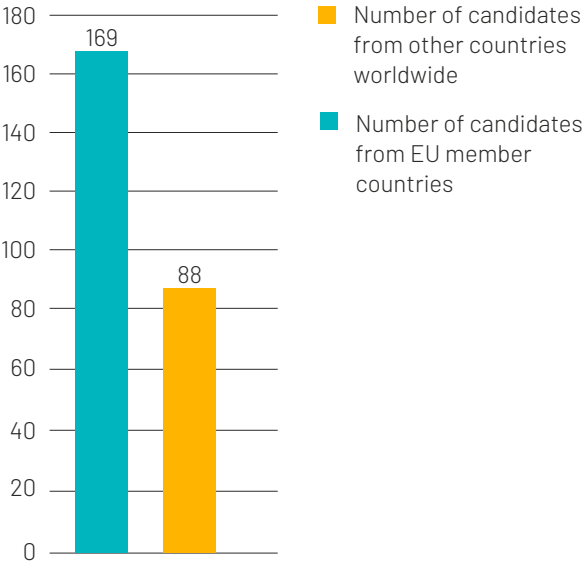


Chart 11: Number of candidates completing high school education, based on countries of completion

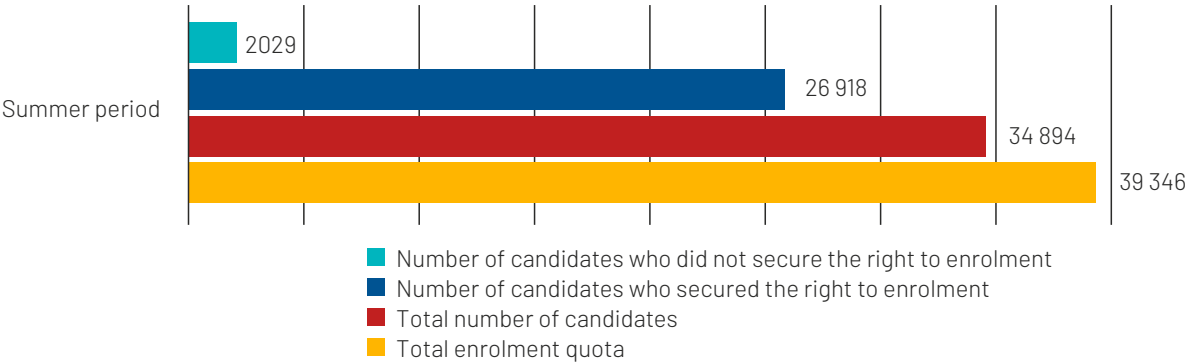


Chart 12: Number of applicants who secured their right of enrolment-undergraduate study programmes in the summer enrolment period

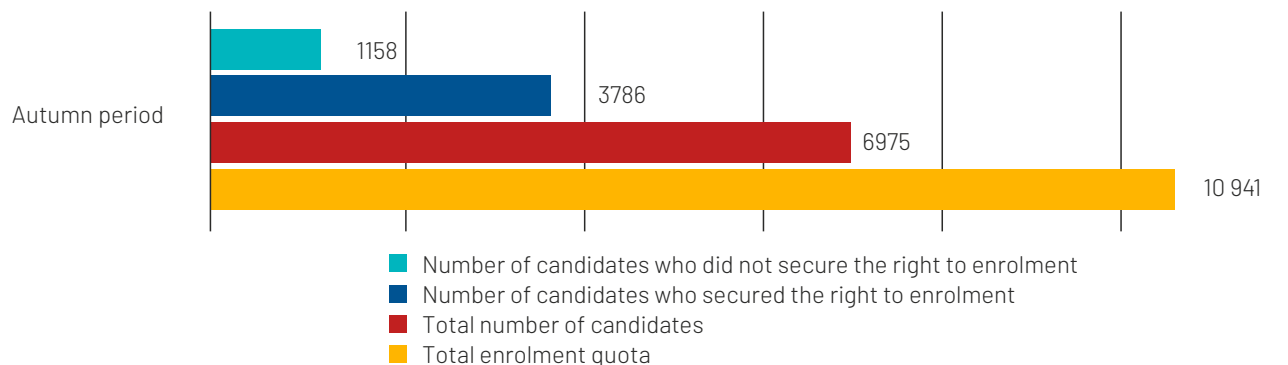


Chart 13: Number of applicants who secured their right of enrolment-undergraduate study programmes in the autumn enrolment period

During the entire year, CAO replied to applicants' queries, responding to 6,610 telephone queries, 3,550 e-mail queries and 2,414 queries submitted via the form available on the website www.studij.hr. Also, CAO staff regularly updated information on the www.studij.hr website, in both Croatian and English.

APPLICATIONS TO GRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

For the fourth year in a row, CAO continued to administer centralised application to graduate studies through the National System of Applications to Graduate Studies (NISpDS). Applications took place between 2nd July and 5th October 2018, when the final ranking lists for enrolment into graduate study programmes were published. This year, the centralised application through NISpDS covered: five constituents of the J.J. Strossmayer University of Osijek (Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Civil Engineering, Department of Culturology, Academy of Arts in Osijek), the Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, the Croatian Catholic University, three constituents of the University of Rijeka (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Faculty of Health Studies, Department of Physics), 21 constituents of the University of Zadar (Department of English, Department of Economics, Department of Ecology, Agriculture & Aquaculture, Department of Ethnology & Anthropology, Department of Philosophy, Department of French and Iberoromance Studies, Department of Geography, Department of German Studies, Department of Information Sciences, Department for Teacher and Pre-school Teacher Education, Department of Classical Philology, The Department of Croatian Language and Literature and South Slavic Philology, Department of Linguistics, Department of Pedagogy, Department of History, Department of History of Art, Department of Psychology, Department of Sociology, Department of Italian Language and Literature, Department of Tourism and Communication Studies, Department of Theology and Catechism), University North, Slavonski Brod Polytechnic, Polytechnic "Lavoslav Ružička" in Vukovar, Polytechnic "Marko Marulić" in Knin, Polytechnic of Požega, Polytechnic of Šibenik, Međimurje Polytechnic in Čakovec, Polytechnic of Zagreb, College for Technology and Business - Pula Polytechnic, the College of International Relations and Diplomacy Dag Hammarskjöld, and College of Agriculture in Križevci.

There were a total of 4,399 open slots at the higher education institutions conducting the centralised application of graduate study programmes through NISpDS. CAO received and processed 549 sets of documents from a total of 2,386 applicants, of whom 1,953 or 81.85% secured their right to enrolment.

Chart 14: Number of candidates for enrolment into graduate studies

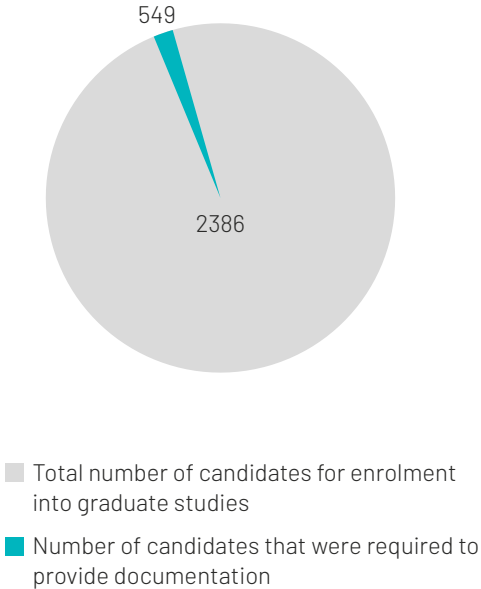
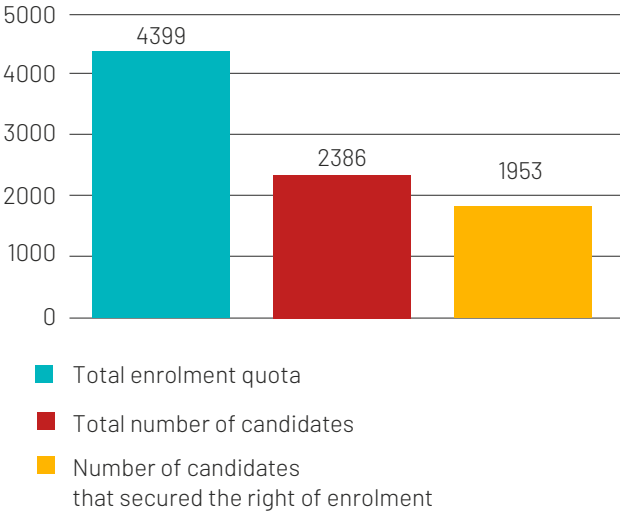


Chart 15: Secured rights to enrolment in graduate study programmes



SUPPORT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

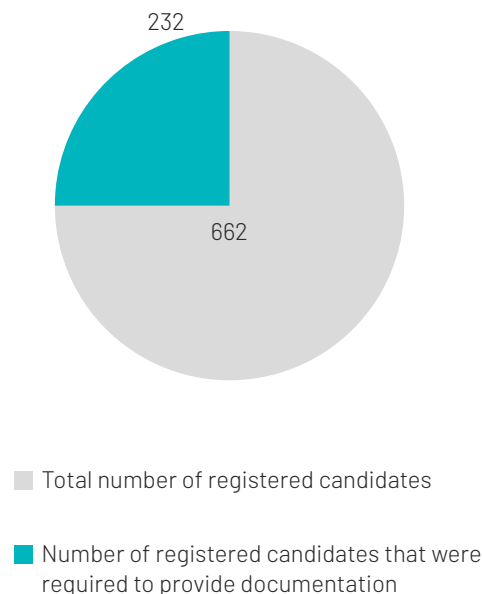
Throughout 2018, CAO continued to provide continuous support to higher education institutions and informed the coordinators about all necessary activities in NISpVU and NISpDS. CAO received 251 telephone and 712 email queries from coordinators.

In 2018, CAO held a meeting with members of the Committee for Improving the Enrolment Procedure to Higher Education Institutions, which was attended by all members and higher education institution representatives and whose aim was to harmonise all activities and deadlines for the application to higher education institutions.

CANDIDATE APPLICATIONS OUTSIDE THE REGULAR EDUCATION SYSTEM OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA FOR ENROLMENT IN THE FIRST GRADE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL

CAO has once again successfully participated in the process of application to the 1st year of secondary schools in the Republic of Croatia, which included candidate registration, verifying the accuracy of personal data and rating the candidates outside the regular education system through the National Information System Registration and Entry High school (NISpuSS) and providing information about the entire procedure. CAO registered 423 candidates in the summer enrolment period, and 239 candidates in the autumn enrolment period. CAO processed documents of 185 candidates in the summer enrolment period, and the documents of 47 candidates in the autumn enrolment period, out of the total of 662 candidates registered by CAO.

Chart 16: Number of applications outside the regular education system of the Republic of Croatia for enrolment in the 1st grade of secondary school



MONITORING GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY AND OTHER RESEARCH

The results of the research on the employability of students who graduated in Croatia in the academic year 2015/2016 were presented in December 2018. The research was conducted by the Agency for Science and Higher Education in cooperation with the Faculty of Organisation and Informatics of the University of Zagreb during 2017. Results of the analysis of collected data were published under the title "What after the diploma?" and represent a useful instrument for the improvement of the system of higher education and encouraging activities aimed at better relationship with the labour market.

As part of presenting research results, there was a round table on the topic "Systematic monitoring of graduate employability for the purpose of connecting education and the economy" that, in addition to the authors of the research dr. sc. Katarina Pažur Aničić and prof. dr. sc. Diana Šimić, was also attended by experts from higher education and representatives of employers and students: prof. dr. sc. Ivan Rimac from the Faculty of Law of the University of Zagreb, dr. sc. Darko Huljenić from Ericsson Nikola Tesla d. d., Mrs. Jasminka Martinović from the Croatian Employers' Association, Mrs. Kristina Alerić from the Croatian Employment Service, Mrs. Vladimira Ivanković Bradić from the Ministry of Labour and Pension System, and Mr. Dominik Ivkošić, president of the Council of Polytechnic' and College' Students. The discussion was moderated by dr. sc. Teo Matković.

In 2018, ASHE continued to participate in the project of monitoring graduate employability. The aim of the project is to collect information from graduates on their experience with higher education and the transition to the labour market. The research was conducted between 10th October and 14th December 2018, in cooperation with the Faculty of Law of the University in Zagreb, on the population of graduated students on the level of Croatia, within the Eurograduate⁵ project that was co-financed from the EU's Erasmus+ programme. The research was coordinated by the consortium of six European research institute, and was conducted by national teams in eight European countries: Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Lithuania, Malta, Norway and Croatia, which will enable the comparison of living and working conditions of graduates in different countries. The survey included students who finished their studies in the academic year 2012/13 and 2016/2017 – meaning one and five years after finishing their studies. The questionnaire was sent to 29,465 e-mails of persons from the target group. The project will result in the publication of a comparative report for all countries included in the research, and a separate report for each country. During the research, 12,053 phone calls were made to target groups with the aim of spreading information on the importance of such research and their effect on the quality of higher education, as well as achieving a higher response rate. Research results in the Croatian language will be published in December 2019.



Presenting the results of the research on graduate employability

Moreover, one of the most extensive research of the secondary school population in Croatia was conducted in 2018. It was coordinated by ASHE within the ESF project SKAZVO⁶, in cooperation with the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb. This scientific-research project, "Analysis of the needs and state in secondary education and education related to informing on higher education choices and procedures for enrolment in study programmes", provided answers to the question of how secondary school students view the continuation of their education and future in Croatia. The research included 59 secondary schools from entire Croatia, with participation from more than 13,000 pupils of first, second, third and final grades of four-year secondary school programmes (vocational and general). As part of the project, recommendations will be developed for the improvement of educational practice and policies connected to the informing and advising on enrolment to higher education and the development of careers at the level of school and the system.

Since September 2018, in cooperation with the Ministry of Public Administration, ASHE provided a new service "e-Exchange of student grades" on the e-Citizens web site. In this way, Croatia also joined the EMREX network⁷, whose purpose is to promote student mobility and encourage students to control their own student data and the exchange of it more effectively, especially beyond the borders of their country. For now, the data is available for three higher education institutions in Croatia: The Catholic University of Croatia, The Technical Polytechnic of Zagreb and the Baltazar Polytechnic in Zaprešić. The plan is to further increase the number of higher education institutions and available data for students. Through the portal e-Citizens, students of higher education institutions will be able to request their electronic transcripts at any time for free. This service will simplify the process of exchanging grades, since students will now be able to request an electronic transcript of their grades and upload them to the university's online site where they will be attending the exchange programme. In the case that the higher education institution is not a member of EMREX, but accepts digital records, the student can also submit an electronically signed document that has been downloaded from the e-Citizens website. Upon returning from their exchange, students can upload their grades on the online site of their home institution.

⁵ <http://www.eurograduate.eu> (3. 1. 2019.)

⁶ <https://skazvo.azvo.hr/hr/> (7. 1. 2019.)

⁷ <https://emrex.eu> (7. 1. 2019.)

4

RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

Recognition is a formal acknowledgement of the value of a foreign education qualification or period of study, issued by the competent authority, for the purpose of the continuation of education or employment. ASHE, or rather its National ENIC/NARIC Office, conducts the procedure of professional recognition of foreign higher education qualifications for the purpose of accessing the labour market in Croatia.

NATIONAL ENIC/NARIC OFFICE

ASHE's National ENIC/NARIC Office is an information centre for academic mobility and recognition of foreign higher education qualifications. The Office is an active member of the European Network of National Information Centres on recognition and mobility (ENIC/NARIC), takes regular part in the Network's meetings and online discussions, and is a partner in a number of European projects.

The National ENIC/NARIC Office provides assistance to institutions and experts responsible for the recognition and validation of qualifications of different levels and types of education, training and professional development, as well as to staff working in human resources. In 2018, special attention was devoted to the recognisability and diversity of expert information which facilitates the recognition of foreign qualifications in Croatia, but also the recognition of Croatian qualifications abroad.

For that purpose, the Office regularly issues clarifications that contain all information on the status of a higher education qualification in the country of origin, as well as an opinion on the comparability of a foreign educational level to the levels of education in Croatia, made by using relevant European mobility instruments for the evaluation of foreign higher education qualifications which increase the visibility of foreign qualifications (qualification frameworks, diploma supplement etc.). In this way, the Office contributes to the final decision on employing a person or enrolling them to a study programme, which is in line with the European best practice on recognition of foreign higher education qualifications.

The Office also conducts the procedure of professional recognition of foreign higher education qualifications and, upon request by the higher education institutions' Offices for Academic Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications, participates in academic recognition by issuing advice for the recognition of qualifications and periods of study abroad.

In addition to providing expertise in administrative procedures and issuing advice and clarifications, the National ENIC/NARIC Office replies daily to questions from foreign and Croatian physical and legal persons about the national and foreign education systems and national and foreign higher education programmes and qualifications.

In 2018, the Office took part in a number of activities aimed at supporting the strategic goal of encouraging and facilitating academic and professional mobility of students and professionals in Europe and beyond, while also contributing to the development of quality assurance platforms for all levels of education. The Office activities, primarily the procedures for recognition of foreign higher education qualifications, are based on European policy guidelines and criteria that help the Office contribute to encouraging mobility.

In 2018 the National ENIC/NARIC Office:

- fully recognised 1762 higher education qualifications for the purpose of accessing the labour market
- responded to 152 requests for advice in academic recognition of foreign higher education qualifications
- issued 96 clarifications of Croatian and foreign higher education qualifications
- replied to 38 requests for the verification of qualification authenticity

- replied to more than 2900 e-mail queries on professional recognition of foreign higher education qualifications in Croatia and abroad, as well as on foreign and Croatian higher education systems and foreign and Croatian higher education study programmes and qualifications.

RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

The recognition of foreign higher education qualifications in Europe and EU member states is done in accordance with the guidelines of The Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (so called Lisbon Convention). External quality assurance of higher education is conducted in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

The Lisbon Convention (ratified by Croatia in 2001) prescribes that the signatory states establish information centres (network ENIC and NARIC), whose primary function is to enable all interested parties access to information on foreign and national system of (higher) education and qualifications, to provide advice on the recognition and evaluation of foreign higher education qualifications and, in accordance with the relevant legislation, make decisions on the recognition, or rather evaluation of foreign educational qualification.

There is no regulation that requires signatory states to have the mentioned centres and bodies for external quality assurance in higher education as part of the same organisation, like it is with ASHE and the Croatian ENIC/NARIC Office, but such practice and close cooperation is strongly encouraged (ENQA, 2017, p. 9-10).

EAR, the 2016 international recognition manual for higher education institutions, established a principle of the Lisbon Convention, the so called *reverse burden of proof* – when a person sends the necessary documentation, it is up to the expert body that conducts the recognition procedure to prove if a certain foreign qualification does not meet the conditions for recognition. The Convention signalled a break with the previous practice of establishing the equivalence of qualifications and the start of a new practice of recognition (acceptance), which is mandatory unless substantial differences between the foreign and the corresponding qualification in the host country can be proven in one of these five elements – level, workload (duration of studies), quality, profile and learning outcomes.

During the years, in addition to the Convention itself, many supporting documents have been adopted – recommendations, examples of good practice, guidelines, instructions etc. Furthermore, with the 2018 Paris ministerial Communiqué, the EHEA countries committed to ensuring that qualifications from other EHEA countries will be automatically recognised at the same level of higher education as the corresponding qualification in the host country (a bachelor degree from an accredited higher education institution within EHEA should be recognised as a bachelor's degree in all EHEA countries). When making a decision to enrol or employ a candidate, only the last two elements – profile and learning outcomes – should be considered. It should be noted that the concept of automatic recognition primarily refers to the acceptance of foreign higher education systems, or rather of systems of external quality assurance based on defined procedures, standards and criteria, publicly available information and bodies in charge of conducting those procedures. In this sense, accepting the ESG as a starting point for the development of national criteria for external quality assurance procedures represents one of additional instruments for building mutual trust and incorporating it into national education systems. Additionally, the EHEA countries committed to working to implement the Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention and its Recommendations, in particular on the recognition of qualifications held by refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation. We also urge the adoption of transparent procedures for the recognition of qualifications, prior learning and study periods, supported by interoperable digital solutions.

Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications in Croatia

From the 1st July 2004, Croatia has been conducting the procedure of foreign higher education qualifications on the basis of the Lisbon Convention principles, or rather the Act on Approving the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region, and in accordance with the Act on Recognition of Foreign Educational Qualifications, which replaced the Act on the Recognition of Foreign School Certificates and University Diplomas that prescribed the procedure of recognition of qualifications.

Recognition of foreign higher education qualifications implies a formal acknowledgement of the value of a foreign higher education qualification, and does not confer any status rights, academic degrees or titles nor any other titles in accordance with Croatian regulations. The procedure of recognition of foreign higher education qualifications focuses only on the level of acquired knowledge, skills and competencies, without comparing study programmes.

In accordance with the relevant regulations, ASHE carries out the procedure of professional recognition of foreign higher education qualifications (for the purpose of accessing the labour market in Croatia for unregulated professions), and the criteria that have to be met are the following:

- that a higher education institution which awarded a qualification had been accredited by a competent accreditation body in the country in which it is located
- that a foreign higher education programme had been accredited by a competent accreditation body of the respective country
- In case of a joint degree, all institutions participating in the delivery of the study programme, as well as the study programme itself, have to be accredited by competent accreditation body of the respective countries in which the institutions participating in the joint degree are located.

The recognition procedure also includes the following criteria:

- minimal level and type of qualification that is necessary to access the study programme which leads to the qualification being recognised
- access to further education and/or employment that the qualification gives.

If the stated criteria are not met, ASHE cannot fully recognise a foreign higher education qualification, which is in compliance with the international practise.

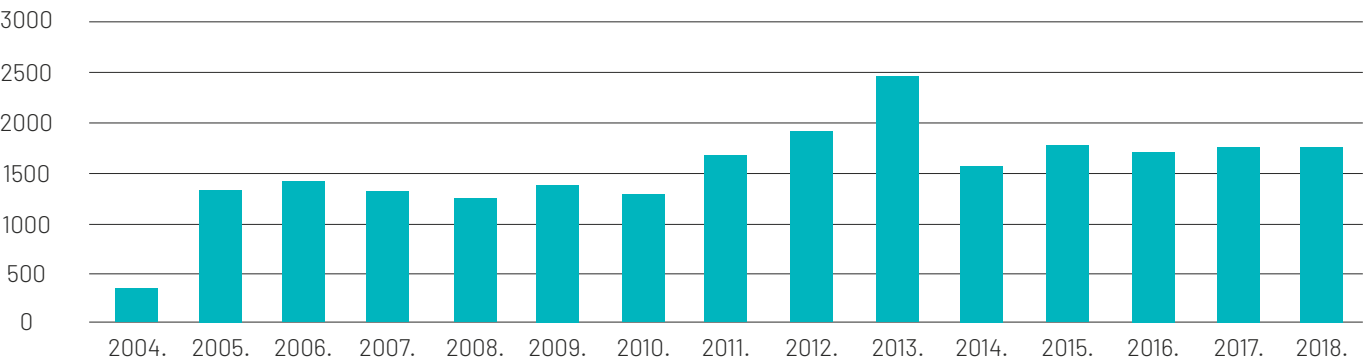


Chart 17: Number of requests for the recognition of foreign higher education qualifications (2004 – 2018)

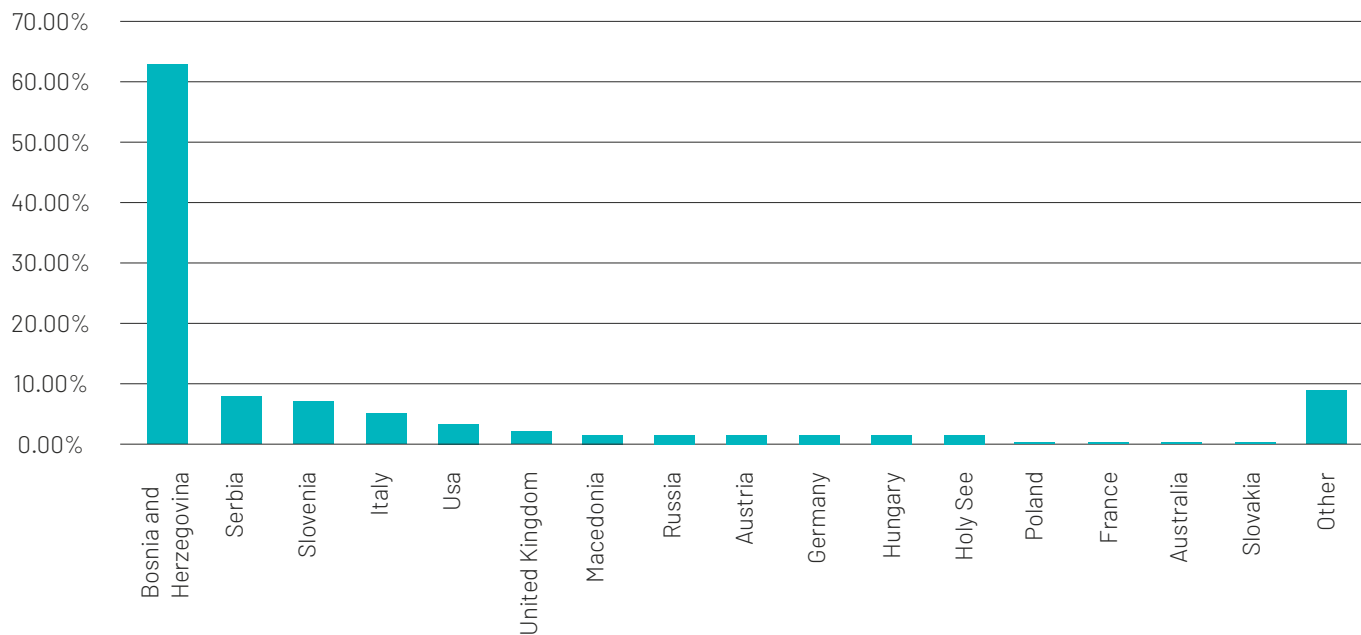


Chart 18: Percentage of foreign higher education qualifications received in 2018 (by country of origin)

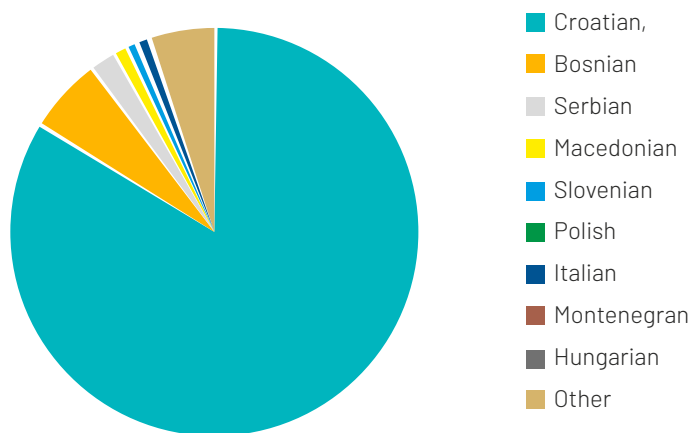


Chart 19: Percentage of foreign higher education qualifications received in 2018 (by applicant's nationality)

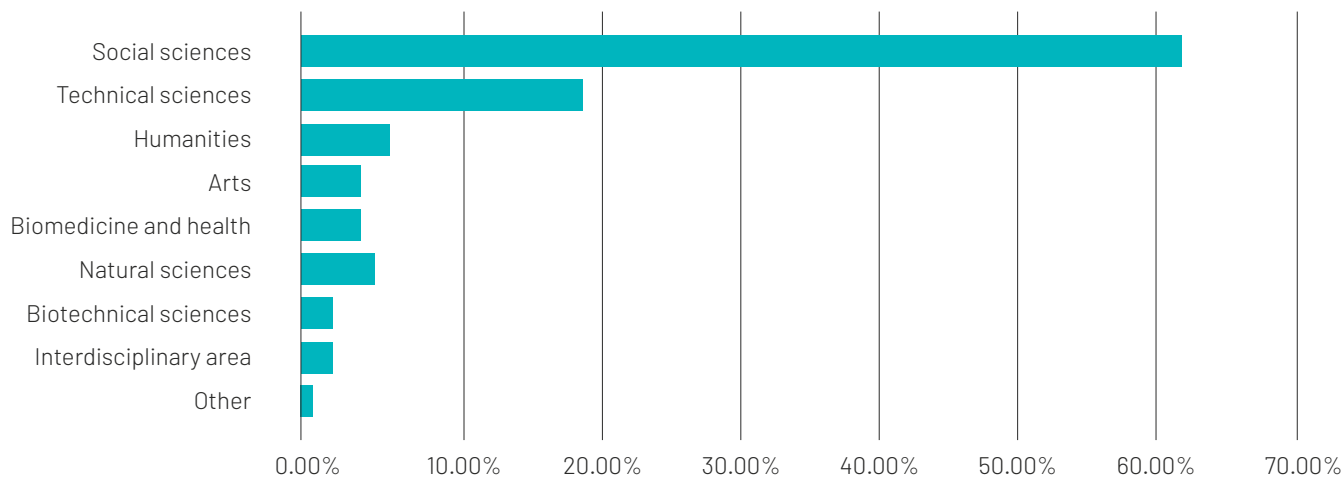


Chart 20: Percentage of foreign higher education qualifications received in 2018 (by scientific area)

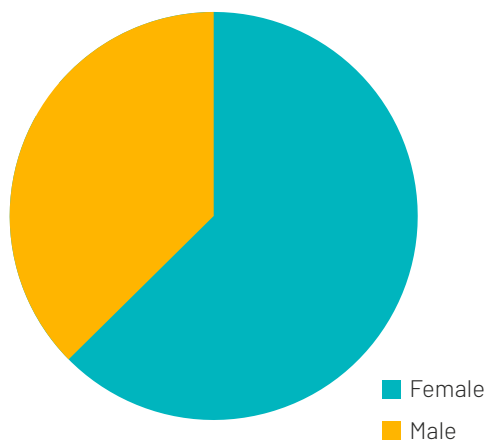


Chart 21: Percentage of foreign higher education qualifications received in 2018 (by applicant's gender)

Out of the total number of applications for professional recognition of foreign higher education qualifications in Croatia in 2018, around 85% were submitted by Croatian citizens, while the remaining 15% were submitted by foreign nationals, mostly citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina with some 5% of the overall number of requests.

Most of the submitted foreign higher education qualifications were obtained in one of the neighbouring countries, mainly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which accounts for 62% of the total number of applications in 2018.

IMPROVING THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR THE RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

Years of experience that have shown that there is a need to change the current Recognition Act led to an initiative to amend it, which in September of 2015 resulted in a Draft Act on the Recognition of Foreign Qualification (a collaboration between all stakeholders). The aim of the proposed Draft is to eliminate the weaknesses of the existing legal and institutional framework in order to improve the procedure of the recognition of foreign education qualifications which determines the level of a foreign education qualification and, in case of recognition for the purpose of employment in unregulated professions, give an opinion on other elements of a qualification which are relevant for the applicant and the employer. This Recognition Act Draft charts a potential direction for improving quality of the recognition system. However, we are aware that it does not include all parts of the system that, unfortunately, still represents a weak link in the effort to open the Croatian labour market and its education to knowledge and competencies acquired abroad, or rather it hampers the professional and academic mobility of citizens. Among other things, this refers to a serious inclusion of all relevant stakeholders, especially representatives of state and public administration, in this system with the aim of harmonising regulations with the reform that was introduced into the system by the Recognition Act and similar issues. Therefore, the future development of an even better system of the recognition of foreign education qualifications necessitates a further strengthening of the cooperation between the Ministry of Science and Education, the National ENIC/NARIC Office, relevant government and public institutions, and representatives of the labour market, higher education institutions, etc., as well as a clear definition of their respective responsibilities.

The new Recognition Act would strengthen evaluation as a part of the recognition of foreign education qualifications (which is defined in detailed by bylaws – the evaluation criteria). Together with the clarification document that is introduced by the Draft Recognition Act, this would open up the possibility of a more detailed explanation of external quality assurance of education in particular country, as well as the possibility to point out their potential problems or nonconformities and give much more information that would be useful to the labour market, educational institutions and others; this would also enable us to act in accordance with European guidelines, which we could not fully incorporate into the existing Act. Since Croatia has already strengthened new reform instruments for improving the quality of education, including the Croatian Qualifications Framework (CROQF), what remains to be done in the upcoming period is the finalise the Draft of the Recognition Act. The aim of this new Draft should also be an additional strengthening of the use of the mentioned instruments for encouraging professional and academic mobility and improve the evaluation of foreign qualifications.

The National ENIC/NARIC Office continued its active participation in the Working Group for Improvement of the Legislative Framework for Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications, and the Committee for Inter-Sectorial Coordination for Regulated Professions. In working with these bodies, the Office provides systematic reviews of international qualification recognition, the connected processes, best practice examples and guidelines for work in the Croatian context, all based on years of experience with working with the ENIC/NARIC network and the Lisbon Recognition Commission.

At the end of 2018, in its Proposed plan of legislative activities for 2019, the Ministry of Science and Education announced the new Act on the Recognition of foreign Qualifications (3rd quarter of 2019).

ASSISTANCE CENTRE FOR PROVIDING INFORMATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

With the new Act on Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications coming into force, the National ENIC/NARIC Office is no longer the *national contact point* for the recognition of foreign professional qualifications, but has been renamed the *Assistance centre for providing information on the recognition of professional qualifications*.

The Office has been continuously working and on developing its role as the Assistance centre for providing information on the recognition of foreign professional qualifications that, according to the Act on Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications, it had since 2009, but which was activated upon Croatia's entry into the EU.

In 2018, in accordance with the Act on Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications and Directive 2005/36/EC, the Assistance centre provided citizens and assistance centres of other European Economic Area (EEA) Contracting States with:

- 1.necessary information on the recognition of foreign professional qualifications in the Republic of Croatia - information about national legislation which governs the access to and pursuit of regulated professions, including social legislations and, if necessary, ethical rules
- 2.assistance in achieving rights arising from the Act on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications
- 3.information on regulated professions and how to access them in other EEA Contracting States
- 4.necessary information on the Database of Regulated Professions and the recognition of foreign professional qualifications in the Republic of Croatia.

The role of the Assistance centre in providing information on the recognition of professional qualifications is purely informational; based on the available information, the Centre refers applicants to competent bodies. If necessary, competent bodies can request an opinion on a particular foreign higher education qualification that contains information on the status of the HEI and study programme in question, the level of education in the country of origin and the comparison to a level of education in Croatia (if possible). The Database of Regulated Professions offers a number of statistical data, which depend on the information being inputted. The Database is not filled by the Assistance Centre, but by appointed employees of competent bodies. According to the available information, there were 153 requests for recognition filled with various competent bodies in 2018.

Table 9: Number of requests for the recognition of professional qualifications (2018)⁸

Competent authority in Croatia	Number of applications for the recognition of foreign professional qualifications (2018)
Croatian Nursing Council	33
Croatian Chamber of Midwives	4
Croatian Chamber of Pharmacists	75
Croatian Chamber of Civil Engineers	29
Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Crafts	4
Other	12
Total	157

⁸ Data from the Database of Regulated Professions.

Next steps for the ENIC/NARIC Office:

- cooperation between the ENIC/NARIC Office and the Ministry of Science and Education on a joint proposal for the draft Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications
- in order to contribute to the improvement of mobility and the recognition of qualifications in the EHEA, the Office will take further steps towards automatic recognition of qualifications at the same level for the purpose of access to further education and the labour market, on the basis of clear and transparent quality assurance system in higher education (e.g. a bachelor degree from an accredited higher education institution within EHEA should be recognised as a bachelor's degree in all EHEA countries)
- encourage the adoption of transparent procedures for the recognition of non-standard qualifications – informal and non-formal learning, qualifications held by refugees and persons who had “non-standard education pathways”
- continued cooperation of ENIC/NARIC Office with higher education institutions on improving and harmonising the existing practices
- continued education of HEI employees in charge of the recognition of foreign higher education qualifications (especially those who work in offices for academic recognition), which would cover topics such as evaluation of foreign qualifications as part of the admission process, developing the criteria for the evaluation of achieved learning outcomes, mobility within Croatia and the connection with the qualification framework, using available tools for the evaluation of foreign qualifications (qualification frameworks, manuals, diploma supplement, ECTS credits, etc.), automatic recognition of qualifications from other EHEA countries, recognition of non-standard qualifications – informal and non-formal learning, qualifications held by refugees and persons who had “non-standard education pathways”
- creating a network of all offices that work on the recognition of foreign qualifications – the idea being to create two networks:
 1. one for all persons in charge of recognition for the purpose of continuing education at universities, polytechnics and colleges
 2. the other would be for competent bodies and persons in charge of the recognition of foreign professional qualifications (regulated professions)

The aim of this initiative is to achieve interinstitutional communication, primarily by e-mail that would speed up the procedures, disseminate good recognition practices and establish communication that is not slow and inefficient.

- Continued participation in international projects: the twinning project “Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education and The Adriatic Recognition Network”(ADREN)project.

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ASHE INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

During 2018, ASHE continued to review a range of activities within the project “Improvement of quality assurance and enhancement systems in higher education” (SKAZVO) which started in June 2016, for which ASHE from the Operational Efficient Programme for Human Resources in 2014-2020 of the European Social Fund has been awarded grants in the amount of almost 20 million and 400 thousand HRK. The aim of the development of a new model of external quality assurance in the higher education level in Croatia, was to implement a series of activities involving ASHE and external stakeholders.

With the conducting of the project SKAZVO and the activities of numerous international projects in which ASHE participates as either a leader or project partner, ASHE was also present in international conferences, workshops and seminars in 2018 where the employees of the Agency held presentations on various topics related to quality assurance in higher education and science.

The Board of Directors of ENQA, of which ASHE is a member since 2011, adopted in 2018 the Report on the implementation of the ASHE Action Plan for follow up of external quality assurance procedures developed on the basis of ENQA's recommendations arising from the ASHE international external evaluation.

In Zagreb, an ASHE meeting was held with representatives of the ENQA Board, with the aim of ENQA becoming even more familiar with work of the Agency and the challenges it is facing, and to consider opportunities for future international cooperation.

In 2018, the Agency also participated in a number of activities in international associations of which it is a member of, for example in the work of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) working groups in the field of internationalisation of higher education, mutual recognition of accreditation decisions and joint studies. Focus was also put on innovation in the accreditation procedures and the work of the ENQA working group for quality assurance and online learning.

The organisation of the ASHE held conference: The future of higher education: quality assurance as a promoter of change

Addressing the changes in the global environment, specifically the challenges through which the higher education institutions face and respond to them, was the goal of the Conference “The future of higher education: quality assurance as a promoter of change. Global, European and Croatian perspectives”. The conference was held on 30 October 2018 in Zagreb, organised by the Agency for Science and Higher Education.

Eminent global and European educational policy experts Dr. Francisco Marmolejo, global lead of tertiary education (the World Bank), Dr. Judith S. Eaton, president of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) in the United States Dr. Karl Dittrich, president of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) and Ms. Tove Blytt Holmen, board member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), presented new insights on the role and position of independent quality assurance agencies in higher education that, through external evaluations, support higher education institutions in their continuous transformation into innovative institutions that successfully deal with contemporary challenges.

The quality of higher education is the only logical answer to the challenges that higher education institutions face around the world, as well as here in our country, emphasized the Director of ASHE,



ASHE director with conference speakers

Prof. Jasmina Havranek, PhD. She also added that the Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education has made tremendous efforts over the past ten years in order for higher education institutions themselves to recognize the importance of quality and assume the responsibility for its improvement.

Higher education and education in general, are the axis of social and economic development. Therefore, the discussion, especially at the international level, encourages changes in order to increase and improve the system, stated in her speech Prof. dr. sc. Blaženka Divjak, minister of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia.

Presentations were also held by Croatian experts who especially focused on the opportunities and challenges in Croatia: prof. dr. sc. Dražan Kozak, Vice-Rector of Josip Juraj Strossmayer University in Osijek, prof. dr. sc. Josip Faričić, Vice-Rector of the University of Zadar and Mr. Aleksandar Šušnjar, representative of the Croatian Student Union and European Student Union. In their presentations, they discussed accreditation and its contribution to the relevance of study programmes and the strengthening of the links between higher education and the economic sector.



Conference "The future of higher education"

The conference brought together over 150 participants from all over Croatia and neighbouring countries: representatives of higher education institutions, the Ministry of Science and Education, the Rectors' Conference, the Council of Polytechnics and Colleges, the National Council for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development, the Croatian Students Union, economic and other stakeholders in the system of higher education and science

ENQA's Quality Assurance and E-Learning Working Group report released

The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) has published the report entitled Considerations for Quality Assurance of e-Learning Provision. The report is the result of the work of ENQA's Working Group VIII for Quality Assurance and Online Learning, of which ASHE is a member and a representative.

The work of the group is motivated by the challenges posed by new, non-traditional forms of learning, such as e-learning and appropriate ways of evaluating such study programmes. Accordingly, the report contains recommendations to agencies on the use of traditional methods of quality assurance in non-traditional forms of learning and teaching and for higher education institutions in the European higher education area with regard to the preparation of such programmes.

ASHE became a member of GUIDE Association

The Agency for Science and Higher Education became a member of the International Association of Global Universities in Distance Education- GUIDE. It is an association that exists since 2005 and aims to develop international cooperation and distance learning at the global level. In addition to the Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education, GUIDE has a membership of 151 institutions from 64 countries.

Regional workshop "Importance of Career Counselling in Higher Education: How to Meet the Labour Market Needs"

A regional workshop entitled "Importance of Career Counselling in Higher Education: How to Meet the Labour Market Needs" was held on Wednesday, December 5th, 2018, at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Rijeka.

The workshop was organized by the Ministry of Labour and Pension System in cooperation with the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE) and the University of Rijeka.

The workshop was attended by 60 participants, mainly career advisers from the higher education institutions, with representatives of the Croatian Employment Service and members of the Forum for Lifelong Career Guidance and Career Development of the Republic of Croatia. The lectures were held by Dr. Rachel Mulvey, PhD, from the University of Warwick (United Kingdom), prof. dr. sc. Zoran Sušan, and Ms. Nikoleta Zubić, both from the Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Rijeka.

The regional workshop was held in framework of the ESF project "Improving the system of lifelong career guidance development by strengthening the role of the Forum for lifelong career guidance and development in the Republic of Croatia" with the aim of strengthening the members of lifelong professional guidance in Croatia.

ASHE INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

The Agency is part of the international quality assurance system in higher education and science and is also a recognized and active member.

ASHE is a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), the Network Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Central and Eastern Europe (CEENQA), an international association of institutions linking the topic of academic ranking and excellence in higher education and science - IREG Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence (IREG Observatory) and is included in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

ASHE is also a member of the International Quality Group (CHEA), the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) and the member of the Observer Status Network in Asia Quality Assurance Agencies Pacific (Asia Pacific Quality Network - APQN). ASHE is a long-time member of the European Network of National Reporting Centres on Academic Mobility and Recognition - the National Academic Recognition Information Centres (ENAC) and the NARIC (National Academic Recognition Information Centres). ASHE is also a member of IAAO (International Association of Admissions Organisations) and the International Association of GUIDE Association - Global Universities In Distance Education.

INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

ASHE is a leader or participant in a series of international projects funded by the European Union programme and other sources.

Table 10: Projects funded by the European Union and other sources

Programme name	Partners	Coordin. inst.	Duration	EU programme/ Source of funding
<i>Improvement of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Systems at Higher Education Institutions (SKAZVO)</i>	-	ASHE	June 2016 – December 2020	European Social Fund
<i>Modernisation, Education and Human Rights (MEHR)</i>	ASHE and higher education institutions from Sweden, Portugal and Croatia, European Student Union	Swedish agency UKÄ	September 2016 – June 2019	Erasmus +
<i>Modernisation of Higher Education Institutions through enhancement of Human Resources Management function (HRMinHEI)</i>	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka; College Algebra Danube University Krems, Austria; University of Tampere, Finland	ASHE	September 2016 – January 2019.	Erasmus +
<i>Strengthening Professional Higher Education and VET in Central & South Eastern Europe (PROCSEE)</i>	European Association of Institutions in Higher Education – EURASHE, Belgium; Knowledge Innovation Centre, Malta; Sdruzeni profesniho terciarniho vzdelavani, Czech Republic; National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania; Hungarian Rectors' Conference, Hungary	Skupnost Višjih Šol Republike Slovenije	November 2015 – December 2018.	Erasmus +

Programme name	Partners	Coordin. inst.	Duration	EU programme/ Source of funding
<i>Information System On pre-Bologna Academic Qualifications (ISOBAQ)</i>	NARIC centres	National Centre for Information and Documentation, Bulgaria, NACID	June 2016 – March 8, 2018	Erasmus +
<i>Recognition of Non-Country Specific Awards (RENSA)</i>	NARIC centres from Malta, Ireland and Lithuania	UK NARIC	May 2016 – start of 2018.	Erasmus +
<i>Emphasis on developing and upgrading of competences for academic teaching (EDUCA-T)</i>	-	Croatian Ministry of Science and Education	June 2016. – July 2018.	Erasmus +
<i>Database of External Quality Assurance Reports (DEQAR)</i>	17 European quality assurance agencies, German Accreditation Council (GAC), Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (HRK)	European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)	November 2017. – November 2019.	Erasmus +
<i>Allocating Credit to European Professional Training Programmes (ACCEPT)</i>	NARIC centres from Latvia, Malta and Netherlands NUFFIC	UK NARIC	Start of 2018.-	Erasmus +
<i>Twinning contract „Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education in B&H“, contract number BA 16 IPA OT 01 18 (Centre for Information and Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education) in Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>	ASHE, ENIC centres from France and Latvia	Croatian Ministry of Science and Education	September 2018. – December 2019.	Twinning contract

OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME EFFICIENT HUMAN RESOURCES 2014-2020 EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND(ESF)

- *Improvement of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Systems at Higher Education Institutions(SKAZVO)*

The SKAZVO project (Improvement of quality assurance and enhancement systems in higher education) is co-financed by the European Union within the framework of the Operational Programme Efficient Human Resources from the European Social Fund.

Project SKAZVO(2016-2020) is conducted with the aim of developing of developing a new model of quality assurance system of higher education in Croatia. The project will develop new and improve existing evaluation procedures for Croatian higher education institutions and study programmes and further strengthen the competences of higher education staff.

The project will launch new activities such as collecting information and informing the general public about higher education and develop counselling services for present and future students, it will also strengthen the role ASHE as an educator at the national and the international level, through cooperation with experts from particular fields, organizes thematic seminars and workshops for higher education institutions and relevant stakeholders.

Thus, in 2018, three workshops on learning outcomes were held in Zagreb, Dubrovnik and Pula, followed by a series of workshops on producing self-evaluation in re-accreditation procedures, new criteria and standards for evaluating in the procedure re-accreditation of higher education institutions on the reconstructed MOZVAG system.



Careering at the Faculty of Organization and Informatics, University of Zagreb

As part of the cycle of workshops entitled Careering during 2018 eight workshops were held In Zagreb, Varaždin Rijeka and Osijek. The workshops were intended for career advisors and employees in career centres at higher education institutions, for introduction to the labour market and for direct contact with future employers.

Within the framework of the SKAZVO project, in early 2018, the pilot re-accreditation in which seven higher education institutions participated. Also, 21 higher education institutions were involved in the re-accreditation of higher education institutions and 16 doctoral programmes were re-accredited.

In mid-2018, within the framework of the project an analysis of ASHE's business processes was conducted with the aim to publish a conceptual design that links existing information systems and their updates with the results of the conducted analysis. The aim of this activity was to develop a design that optimizes business processes and concepts of future information system integration within ASHE, which will enable optimum business process evaluation, integration and divisibility of data, as well as easier data management and reporting. The expert consortium engaged with the public procurement procedures after the workshops and consultations with ASHE employees resulted in the proposal for the ASHE future business process mode to ensure the complete functionality of the system, i.e. submitted a proposal of conceptual design with IT solutions.

It is a proposal for the future business processes that is designed to take into account the current state, as well as the possibilities for developing a future integrated information system of ASHE.

PROGRAMME ERASMUS+

- *Modernisation of Higher Education Institutions through enhancement of Human Resources Management function (HRMinHEI)*

The HRMinHEI project (Modernisation of Higher Education Institutions through enhancement of Human Resources Management function) is implemented by the Agency for Science and Higher Education from 2016 to 2018. The partners of the project are Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Rijeka, Algebra University College, and Danube University Krems from Austria and University of Tampere from Finland. The project is co-financed by the Erasmus + European Union funds and amounts to 241 725 euros.

Project purpose is to strengthen human resources management at higher education institutions and to develop innovative self-assessment tools for benchmarking human resources management. Acting on the need to raise awareness of human resources' contribution to the development of the whole society, this project will encourage higher education institutions to improve the effectiveness of their human resources management and thus strengthen their contribution to social and economic growth and improve the cooperation between countries of the European higher education area. HRMinHEI project complements the main determinants of the Erasmus + programme and EU Modernisation Agenda for Higher Education adopted in 2011.

As part of the project, the Agency organized a conference "Human Resources Management at HEIs" in Zagreb in March 2018.

The results of the HRMinHEI project were presented on November 30 2018, at the University Rijeka. The conference featured an innovative online tool for self-evaluation and analysis of Human Resources Management (HRM) functions at European higher education institutions developed within the project and available to higher education institutions from Croatian and across on the web site. <https://hrminhei.azvo.hr/>.



HRMinHEI conference at the Faculty of Economics, University of Zagreb

The human resources management guidelines were also presented at higher education institutions in the Republic of Croatia, selected processes and tools related to HRM development at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Rijeka and the Algebra University of Applied Sciences. Participants also had an opportunity to hear how the University of Zadar and the Faculty of Civil Engineering, Architecture and Geodesy of the University of Split developed this function.

Throughout the project, a document was published and published, a Review of the current European and national human resources management policies at higher education institutions in the European higher education area.

Work provides theoretical basis and framework through ten key dimensions of human resource management and illustrates their changes in higher education institutions. It also provides a brief discussion of existing policies at EU level and provides analysis of human resource management policies and policies in the field of higher education for the Republic of Croatia, Austria and Finland.

- *Modernisation, Education and Human Rights (MEHR)*

The International project for Modernisation, education and human rights (MEHR) aims to develop guidelines for ensuring the quality of learning outcomes, focusing on human rights issues. The Agency for Science and Higher Education is one of the partners in this international project, which runs from 2016 to 2019, and is funded by the European Union funds the Erasmus + programmes.

The project is conducted by the Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKTA) with the University Karolinska Institute and the European Students' Union (ESU), the Agency for Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education-A3ES from Portugal along with the University of Lisbon and the Agency for Science and Higher Education with the Faculty of Teacher Education of the University of Rijeka.

The value of the MEHR project in examining the importance that external quality assurance agencies attach to the definition and implementation of learning outcomes in the field of human rights and on the basis of external evaluations. One of the main goals of the project is to develop a common tool-evaluation guidelines and quality assurance of learning outcomes that include topics and issues in the area of human rights, in a way that includes a wide spectrum of stakeholders in the system, from management and quality assurance bodies to teachers and scientists i.e. students, but also the non-governmental sector, professionals from their fields, and career representatives to which study programmes lead to.

During the project, the information that is collected and conducted through surveys on the extent to which the study programmes include learning outcomes in the field of human rights. Surveys include higher education institutions with their lecturers and students of the study programmes. Data analysis will provide insight into learning outcomes with emphasis on three aspects of human rights as well as identify those study programmes that are examples of good practice.

The project research is carried out from three different perspectives. The Swedish Higher Education Agency (UKTA) with its partner Karolinska Institute emphasized during the project the gender perspective of human rights, namely the following outcomes of learning: gender-based and domestic violence and violence against children. The University of Lisbon and the Portuguese Agency for Assessment and Accreditation (A3ES) research are documented from the perspective of incorporating the following learning outcomes: human rights, migration and citizenship as well as intercultural skills and communication in higher education. The Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education and the Faculty of Teacher Education of the University of Rijeka emphasize human rights, children's rights and participation as well as children and students as active citizens.

In September 2018, a workshop with stakeholders was held in Lisbon and an international conference entitled "Migration and Intercultural Skills", attended by an ASHE representative.

The Swedish Higher Education Authority finished their project report in 2017 entitled "A gender perspective on human rights education. Assessing learning outcomes in higher education on human rights; men's violence against women and domestic violence; and violence towards children in programmes in medicine and social welfare".

The project report produced by the Portuguese partners entitled “Assessing LO on HR education. Case study: Human rights, migration and intercultural skills and competences for social inclusion within education in law, social work and geography” as well as the project report entitled “Assessing LO on HR education. Case study: Human rights, active citizenship and democratic participation within educational professions and social work programmes” were completed in December 2018.

In October 2018, ASHE started with the organisation of an international conference, which began with the preparation of a workshop with stakeholders on the national level. Both events will be held at the end of January 2019 at the University of Rijeka.

- *Recognition of Non-Country Specific Awards (RENSA)*

The aim of the project *Recognition of Non-Country Specific Awards (RENSA)*, which is led by the NARIC office in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, where ASHE participates also one of the partners, was the further development and sharing of good practice and information to support fair and as appropriate consistent recognition of non-country specific qualifications.

In the context of this project, “non-country specific” awards are defined as those which are wholly international, and do not form part of any one national education system. These may include, but are not limited to long-standing qualifications offered by international awarding bodies and increasingly, nationally recognised awarding bodies offering customised international awards which fall outside of the remit of the national regulator. During the project, guidelines and guidelines for evaluating specific qualifications that are not part of the education system of a particular country have been developed. The draft of this document was presented through webinars and following meetings held during the 24th conference ENIC and NARIC centres in Copenhagen in June.

The project was formally completed in August 2017, while the guidelines and instruction were publically presented at the beginning of 2018.

- *Information system on the Pre-Bologna Academic Qualifications (ISOBAQ)*

The objective of the ISOBAQ project is to create and provide to the NARIC network one more recognition tool for enhancing the visibility, comparability, transparency and trust-based fair recognition, which would promote mobility in the field of education and employment.

This information system has been established and contains structured data on existing national legislations and levelling of the existing pre-Bologna higher education qualifications and national qualifications frameworks. Such a structured information source could be used for bridging where possible the pre-Bologna higher education qualifications towards the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) which would enrich its nature a helpful tool for comparison, assessment, fair recognition and transparency. The project ended in the first quarter of 2018.

This information system has been established and contains structured data on existing national legislation and the alignment of pre-Bologna qualifications and valid national higher education qualifications and national qualifications frameworks. This structured information source can be used to bridge the gap between pre-university higher education qualifications according to the European Qualifications Framework. It also provides additional benefit to this comparison, assessment, impartial recognition and transparency tool. The project ended in the first quarter of 2018.

- *Emphasis on developing and upgrading of competences for academic teaching (Educa-T)*

•ASHE is actively involved in the Educa-T project (*Emphasis on developing and upgrading of competences for academic teaching*) which is supported by the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia. The project is co-funded by the European Union's Erasmus+ programme(Key Activity 3).

The project started on June 15, 2016 and lasted until June 14, 2018. It is designed to support activities at the national level, focusing on strengthening the role of university lecturers and increasing awareness of the importance of improving the quality of learning and teaching in higher education. The working group of the project, whose work includes representatives of ASHE, has made recommendations on quality teaching and learning in Croatian higher education and the national profile of competences and a framework curriculum for improving the competences of lecturers in higher education.

• *Allocating Credit to European Professional Training Programmes*(AcCEPT)

In early 2018 the AcCEPT project, funded by the ERASMUS+ programme, was launched to further strengthen the use of European recognition tools and increase the visibility of their content. Some of these tools are the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), qualifications framework, the European Qualifications Framework(EQF) and so on, all in order to promote synergies among similar educational systems and practices in order to qualify and recognize foreign qualifications on trust between countries.

The project also seeks to further encourage the use of learning outcomes in assessing international qualifications acquired within different forms of education-formal/non-formal/informal which will further help in creating a methodology for assessing professional training and similar lifelong learning programmes. The AcCEPT project is UK NARIC, partners are NARIC Latvia, ENIC Malta, NUFFIC, and Croatian ENIC/NARIC office of the Agency for Science and Higher Education.

• *Database of External Quality Assurance Reports*(DEQAR)

The Agency for Science and Higher Education is a partner in the project Database of External Quality Assurance Reports(DEQAR), coordinated by the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education(EQAR). The Agency for Science and Higher Education has been registered at EQAR since 25 November 2011 and has renewed its membership in accordance with the EQAR Council's decision of 20 June 2017.

DEQAR is a two-year project, covering the period from November 2017 to October 31, 2019, which envisages the creation of a European database with information on the outcome of the evaluation of higher education institutions. The objective of the project is to ensure easier access to reports and decisions resulting from the evaluation of higher education institutions carried out by EQAR-registered agencies, thereby increasing transparency in procedures for ensuring the quality of higher education in the European Higher Education Area. The project will be funded by the European Erasmus + programme.

The database is expected to enable a broad range of users, including but not limited to:

- recognition information centres(ENIC-NARICs)
- recognition and admission officers in higher education institutions
- students and student organisation representatives
- quality assurance agencies
- Ministry representatives and other national authorities

In order to combat the difficulties that users frequently face, the Database, once completed, will enable users to identify higher education institutions that have been subject to external quality assurance by EQAR member agencies and allow for simplified access of related external quality assurance reports.

In March 2018 a workshop was held in Bonn for members of the project on the technical steps required for the full functionality of the base where the Agency for Science and Higher Education is listed as an example of good practice.

In May 2018 EQAR announced through the press release the recent launch of the European database on assessment outcomes of higher education entitled Database of External Quality Assurance Reports (DEQAR) at <http://www.deqar.eu/>. Seventeen registered EQAR agencies, including ASHE, are actively participating as technical partners for project partners, while other partners are key organisations of European stakeholders – ENQA, ESU, EUA, EURASHE, Education International, CIMEA and the University of Ghent.

In accordance with the responsibilities undertaken in the project, ASHE has prepared and submitted the necessary information on higher education institutions and all final documents from the first round of re-accreditation, with final reports of expert panels available in Croatian and English.

The current database overview includes about 400 higher education institutions, most of them from Belgium (the Flemish Community), Croatia, Finland, Romania and Spain (Catalonia). Further growth and development of DEQAR is expected in the future, and all agencies registered at EQAR have been invited to be included in the reports and results of their work.

- *Strengthening Professional Higher Education in Central and South-Eastern Europe (PROCSEE)*

The national conference and the round table discussion on improving professional higher education in Croatia and its contributions to the local community were held on 26 November 2018, organized by ASHE and the Council of polytechnics and colleges

The conference presents the results of the PROCSEE project – Professional Higher Education Excellence in Central and South-Eastern Europe), Challenges and Examples of Good Practice in Higher Education in Croatia, and proposals for policy improvement in order to respond to the mentioned challenges. The project lasted from November 2015 to December 2018.

TWINNING PROJECT

- *Empowering Institutional Capacities for Recognition of foreign Qualifications in Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina*

The Twinning project "Twinning Contract "Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education" The purpose of the project is to further develop Bosnia and Herzegovina's institutional capacities and human resources in the recognition of foreign higher education qualifications in Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. harmonizing procedures for recognizing foreign qualifications with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition of Qualifications (*The Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region*, LRC) and through the project will work on strengthening human resources and aligning legislation. The project is funded by the European Union and is implemented in cooperation with the Croatian Ministry of Science and Education, the Agency for Science and Higher Education, the International Centre for Pedagogical Studies of the Republic of France and the Academic Information Centre of the Republic of Latvia together with experts from the Centre for Information and Recognition of Documents in the field of higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (CIP).

The project activities are implemented through three components: improving the legislative framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina procedures for recognizing foreign qualifications in higher education and strengthening human capacities. The project started in October 2018 and lasts for 15 months.

COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENCE AND PRESENTING ASHE'S WORK ABROAD

A meeting was held with the representative of the ENQA Board of Directors

At the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE), on Wednesday 31 October 2018, a meeting was held between the Director of ASHE, Prof. Jasmina Havranek, PhD and the Agency's employees with Ms. Tove Blytt Holmen, representative of the Board of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and the Norwegian Quality Assurance Agency (NOKUT).

The meeting was held after the invitation from the director of ASHE Prof. Havranek in accordance with ENQA's decision that members of its Board will visit all member agencies in the next three years. The purpose of the visit is to get to know the member agencies better, and understand the needs and challenges that quality assurance agencies face in their work. On the other hand, the agencies will also become familiar with all the forms of support that ENQA offers to its members in the context of their work.

During the meeting, the current priorities of the work, specifically the areas in which ASHE is working intensively were presented along with the most important challenges currently facing ENQA's cooperation and support areas.

A reminder that ENQA representative, Ms. Tove Blytt Holmen, delivered a lecture on the European perspective of Independent external quality assurance in higher education at the conference *The future of higher education: quality assurance as the promoter of the change* held on Thursday 30 October 2018 in Zagreb.

Representatives of the Latvian AIC visited ASHE

Representatives from the *Academic Information Centre (AIC)* in Latvia visited the Agency for Science and Higher Education on Friday, March 9, 2018. The purpose of this visit was to become familiar with the databases used by ASHE to record information on higher education institutions-Module for valuation of higher education institutions (MOZVAG) and Central Evidence Procedures (CEP). Aside from that, the discussions at the meeting were about valuation procedures which are carried out by ASHE and other activities as well as the system of higher education in Croatia.

ASHE was visited by experts from the field of academic ranking

In May 2018, ASHE visited Mrs. Romina Miorrelli (University of Westminster, London) and Mr. Alex Usher (Higher Education Strategy Associates - HESA, Toronto) and held a series of meetings with ASHE employees, representatives of the Working Group for Development of Comparative Methodology of Higher Education Institutions and various stakeholders in the field of higher education and science on academic ranking.



Representatives of the Latvian AIC visited ASHE

Study visit of delegation from Agency for Control and Quality Assurance of Higher Education of Montenegro

The seven-member delegation of the Montenegrin Agency for the Control and Quality of Higher Education (AKVO), led by the director Dr. Srđo Popović, visited the Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE) with the aim of gathering experience in the organisation of quality assurance agencies and the conducting of quality assurance procedures in the higher education system and meeting the requirements for joining international associations of quality assurance agencies.

During a two-day visit, ASHE staff acquainted colleagues from Montenegro with the procedures, processes and methodology of all the evaluations carried out by ASHE, and also shared ASHE's experience in preparing and joining international associations of quality assurance agencies, focusing on membership in ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) and EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education).

This visit was preceded by a meeting of representatives of ASHE, the Croatian National Council for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development with representatives of the Montenegrin Parliament in charge of the field of higher education on the optimization of the Montenegrin legislative framework for higher education and science, i.e. a high-quality allocation of responsibilities and scope of work amongst institutions of higher education and science.

The Agency was visited by delegation from Azerbaijan

As part of a study visit to Croatia, the Agency for Science and Higher Education was visited by representatives of the ministries of the Republic of Azerbaijan that are responsible for education and work, agencies for professional education and institutes of education.

At the meeting with the representatives of the Agency, a discussion was held about quality assurance, the effective application of national qualifications framework and the activities of ASHE.

The visit was organized under the project "Support to the Implementation of National Qualifications Framework in Azerbaijan" that is funded by the European Union, with the aim of improving the quality and relevance of education in Azerbaijan through the support of economic diversification, creating opportunities for lifelong learning and meeting the goals of the strategy to develop education in line with good European and international practice.



Delegation from Azerbaijan visited ASHE

PRESENTATIONS AND PARTICIPATIONS AT PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES AND PUBLICATIONS IN RECENT INTERNATIONAL JOURNALS AND NEWSLETTERS

ECA-NVAO seminar "Institutional and Programme Reviews: Towards New Combinations"

The European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) and The Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and the Flanders (NVAO) organized a seminar titled Institutional and Programme Reviews: Towards New Combinations on February 1, 2018. The seminar was organized with the aim of sharing information on trends in the conducting of external evaluation procedures in higher education, particularly in relation to the implementation of programme or institutional rating models amongst European quality assurance agencies. The seminar was attended by representatives of ASHE and representatives of ASHE Accreditation Council.

Public presentation of the results of the international FRAUDOC project

On February 7, 2018, the results of the international project FRAUDOC – *Guidelines on the Diploma Mills and Document Fraud for Credential Evaluators*, financed by ERASMUS +, were presented. The aim of this project was to raise awareness of the experts working on the evaluation of foreign higher education qualifications, students, institutions of higher education and the general public on the frequency of false diplomas or counterfeit documents confirming the completion of a study programme and also to provide guidelines for a high quality evaluation of authenticity documents.

Within the project, two concrete instruments were developed for professionals working on the evaluation and recognition of foreign qualifications in ENIC and NARIC centres, at universities and for the general public. The first instrument is a False Detection Guide designed for anyone working on the evaluation of foreign qualifications, while the other instrument is intended for professionals working in ENIC and NARIC centres to further develop mechanisms for quality certification of diplomas in their national recognition of foreign qualifications – Guide through inaccurate documents. The project lasted from February 2016 to January 2018.

Meetings of ECA consortium working groups and meetings of ECA members

ASHE as a full member of the ECA has been actively involved in the work of the various ECA working groups and international projects in the aspects of the promotion of higher education in Europe, working on the development of different areas, from the improvement of the quality assurance procedures themselves, accreditation of joint study programmes, digitization of external evaluation procedures, cooperation with various stakeholders, establishment of European universities and other issues in the field of higher education.

Regular meetings of ECA's working groups and joint member meetings were held in 2018 at the University of Deusto in Bilbau, Spain in April, then in June in Ljubljana, at the Slovenian quality assurance agency for higher education (NAKVIS) and in November in Prague in the Czech National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education.

During the meetings in Ljubljana and Prague, the work of the working groups was analysed, the results were achieved and plans for the next period were defined, new opportunities for reporting international projects were considered and plans for the next period were defined. At the annual meeting of the ECA members, i.e. the ECA Committee in Ljubljana, the new members of the Committee, the president and deputy were elected. During the autumn meetings in Prague, ASHE gave its contribution to the work of the working groups and the planning of new projects and activities at the ECA level. Thus, ASHE further enhances its external quality assurance procedures, opens up space for new international co-operation and increases the visibility of its expertise and work on the international scene.

Workshop on university autonomy at Leicester University

The European University Association (EUA) organized a two-day workshop titled "University Autonomy in Europe: Trends, Benefits, Challenges and Threats" on 23 and 24 April 2018 at the University of Leicester in the United Kingdom. At the workshop, which brought together the heads of European universities, also attended by an ASHE representative, they discussed the challenges that universities face today when it comes to their autonomy and the influence that public policy makers have on the autonomy of the university.

Seminar on Mobility Windows in Higher Education

As part of the organisation Tempus Public Foundation, Ministry of Human Capacities, Hungary and ERASMUS+ office Hungary on 24 and 25 April 2018 in Budapest a regional capacity building was held entitled Impact and implementations of mobility windows in higher education – Central and East European Regional Peer Learning Activity and was attended by a representative of the Agency for Science and Higher Education. The thematic seminar i.e. a meeting on the topic of using new tools such as the "Mobility windows" for further encouraging the recognition of learning outcomes and points acquired outside the home university, gave an additional contribution to ASHE's deliberations on this topic.

Mobility windows is a period during studies reserved for international student mobility that is embedded into the study curriculum. Mobility windows cover a wide range of different types of mobility, from strictly defined student exchanges to more flexible academic exchanges, depending on types of contracts, individual deals and similar.

Mobility window is a tool designed to improve and increase academic mobility, which should be integrated into the study programme. It should be more detailed than the bilateral agreement between higher education institutions-this is an additional contract between lecturers themselves, with additional details, so that there is no problem with the later recognition of credits, modules, acquired knowledge, study periods and similar. The MOWIN project was launched in order to achieve the mentioned objectives and more specifically explore the possibilities for better cooperation, and to ensure that the international deadlines within the plans for realization of the academic mobility were integrated into syllabus and study programmes in Europe. The MOWIN project was also launched as one of the possible solutions for mobility quality assurance for Mobility window. The project attempted to further quantify the phenomenon of mobility windows, review options for its use and further development, specifically the challenges for further development of this tool.

The Mobility Window as an additional tool to ensure the quality of academic mobility i.e. the recognition of learning outcomes outside the parent institution of study, can serve ASHE or higher education institutions as a director for further development of criteria for increasing academic mobility and inter-university cooperation. Although it is still in development, this tool certainly provides some practical frameworks for application and integration within the higher education institutions themselves i.e. their curricula. The usefulness and use of such and similar instruments should certainly be subject to further discussions, both within ASHE, as well as the level of policy players i.e. higher education institutions themselves.

Annual Euprio Network Conference

The annual conference of the Euprio Network (European Universities Public Relations and Information Officers) entitled *The digital transformation: a challenge for communications in higher education* was held on 3 to 6 June 2018 in Seville, Spain.

Euprio association brings together experts in communications, public relations and marketing in higher education institutions from all over Europe. It was established in 1986 with the support of the European Community, to promote the exchange of ideas and experiences amongst its members, both within the whole communication field and particularly from the institutions of higher education's perspective. The association has more than 750 members in 15 European countries, while ASHE and the University of Zagreb have been involved in the activities of the association since 2016. The theme of this year's conference was digital transformation and its impact on the area of communication in higher education. Approximately 350 participants from almost all European countries, including Croatia, gathered. They had the opportunity to hear numerous lectures and participate in workshops on the value and influence of social media, especially in communication with current and future students as well as alumni. This was also an opportunity for further linking of ASHE with the Euprio network and planning future cooperation to complement the already held workshop for Croatian communications experts at higher education institutions. Namely, in May 2018, ASHE, Euprio and the University of Zagreb organized a workshop on the planning of communication activities at higher education institutions.

Conference for Ministers of the EHEA and the Fifth Bologna Policy Forum in Paris

The Conference for Ministers of the European Area of Higher Education (EHEA) and the Fifth Bologna Policy Forum were held in Paris on 24 and 25 May 2018. This conference was the ninth one, held 20 years after the signing of the Sorbonne Declaration, which was an opportunity to review the achievements and recognition of new challenges. Ministers and delegations from 48 countries of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and representatives from various European organisations participated.

Fifth regional conference of ENIC and NARIC centres

Representatives of the National ENIC/NARIC Office participated in the 5th regional meeting of ENIC and NARIC centres that took place on the 10th October 2018 in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The meeting was organised and hosted by the Centre for Information and Recognition of Qualifications of Higher Education of Bosnia and Herzegovina (CIP).

Regional meetings of ENIC and NARIC centres have become a tradition and are organised in order to discuss current issues related to the recognition of foreign higher education qualifications, with an emphasis on the challenges facing the countries in the region.

The topic of this year's meeting was the Recognition of foreign higher education qualifications: current issues, challenges, and good and bad practices.

In addition to the representatives of the Croatian ENIC/NARIC Office and CIP, the meeting was attended by the representatives of the Slovenian ENIC/NARIC centre, the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Srpska Commission for Information and Recognition, and the Office for General Affairs of the University of Sarajevo.



Regional meeting of ENIC and NARIC centres

Third IHEC 2018 conference

From 11 to 13 October 2018, Abdullah Gül University (AGU) and Association for Higher Education Studies (AHES) in Kayseri, Turkey, held the third professional and scientific international conference on higher education called Revisiting Higher Education in an Ever-Changing World (IHEC 2018), attended by representatives of ASHE.

The main objective of the conference was to create a platform for joint research in the field of higher education and to develop discussion on new trends, results of different research and theoretical perspectives. The focus of the conference was on macro policies, public policy models, reform activities and various methodological proposals in relation to the challenges, opportunities, expectations and challenges facing higher education around the world.

The IHEC 2018 Conference was an opportunity for ASHE to gain insight into the current topics that international experts and scientists dealing with research in higher education are interested in and dedicate their attention. The thematic framework of the conference encompassed the questions and challenges that have been facing for a number of years in the field of higher education - high-quality employability of graduates, planned audits and evaluation of acquired learning outcomes in line with the needs of the economy, but also with the new challenges of the society as a whole, the quality of the institutional colleges, co-operation between disciplines and stakeholders and so on. All these are challenges and themes that lie ahead of Croatian higher education and which ASHE is considering in planning its activities, especially in changing the criteria and standards on which it carries out its external quality assurance procedures in higher education and science, and using objective data and surveys that collect the results of the various actions it conducts (re-appointment, audit, enrolment at higher education institutions, recognition of qualifications, etc.).

In order for the development or improvement of the quality of higher education to be in line with the challenges of contemporary social and economic development, the conference has highlighted, among other things, the need for higher education policy to be as much a subject of

scientific and professional research. Only in this way, using objective data, it is possible to propose further developmental directions, i.e. to introduce changes in the higher education system, in all its aspects and roles for society. It is important, in the context of international trends, to focus on the appreciation of national needs, i.e. the needs of individual areas and occupations. Only in this way can the students, employers and the society as a whole get the full value of the outcomes of higher education, and then higher education gets its full meaning and accomplishment of its mission and responsibilities.

Academic International Conference of the APQN Network

Organized by the Asia Pacific Quality Network (APQN), from 22 to 25 March 2018, an international conference called Capacity Building for Next-Generation Quality Assurance in Higher Education was held in Nagpur, India. The host of this year's World Conference was Shri Shivaji

Education Society Science College and Dhanwate National College. Representatives of the ASHE presented the work of the Agency at the conference, the Croatian and European models of external quality assurance and the Croatian higher education system. ASHE is a long-time member of the observer status in the Asia Pacific Quality Network (APQN) and has been hosting many of the experts in the field of quality improvement for higher education from Asia over the years. Therefore, the invitation to participate in the Nagpur Conference was a continuation of successful co-operation with colleagues from this part of the world and the opportunity to present Croatian higher education and work on improving its quality to the wider world professional auditorium. Likewise, during the conference the opportunities for further cooperation and projects were discussed with representatives of Asian higher education institutions and institutions for quality assurance in higher education.



International Conference of the APQN Network

PRESENTATIONS

Havranek, J., Agency for Science and Higher Education Croatia - activities & challenges, The World Bank Summer Executive Programme, Beijing, China, 23 - 31 August, 2018.

Havranek, J., Achievements in Quality and Future Challenges - What have we done together and what should we do? The Second University Quality Day, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia, 30 November 2018.

Havranek, J., Bezjak, S. QA as a tool for effective management - Croatian example, World Education Day - 2018, Jinan, China, 28-30, September 2018.

Havranek, J., ASHE activities related to linking education and labour market, Koprivnica, Regional Conference; Round Table: Education in the Function of Economic Development of the Republic of Croatia - Perspectives and Challenges, Koprivnica, Croatia, 16 November 2018.

Havranek J., Petrušić, I., Internationalization and Quality Assurance in Croatia, Regional Roundtable on "Internationalization in Higher Education - Challenges and Opportunities" Riga, Latvia, 4 April 2018.

Bezjak, S., The re-accreditation procedure from the perspective of the Agency for Science and Higher Education, within the framework of the conference "Croatian Qualifications Framework: Mechanism to Ensure Relevance of Education", Rijeka, Croatia, 7 December, 2018.

Bezjak, S., Re-accreditation – yesterday, today, tomorrow, panel discussion within the seminar "The Second University day of the University of Zagreb", Zagreb, Croatia, 30 November 2018.

Bezjak, S., Re-accreditation experiences according to the new model, Workshop for professional development of lecturer training programmes, Military engineering and military Management and Management, Mali Losinj, Croatia, 12-14 September 2018.

Bezjak, S., New cycle of re-accreditation of higher education institutions in Croatia, ECA-NVAO Seminar: Institutional and Programme Reviews: Towards new Combinations, Brussels, Belgium, 1 February 2018

Cvitanušić Brečić, M. Optimization of re-Accreditation of Croatian higher education institutions Process using Open Resources, International PUBMET2018 Conference, Zadar, Croatia, 19 – 22, September 2018

Dodiković-Jurković V., ASHE Internal Quality Assurance, held at the 2018 APQN Annual Conference (AAC) and Annual General Meeting (AGM) in the Internal Quality Assurance of Quality Assurance Agencies (QAAs) section; Capacity Building for Next-Generation Quality Assurance in Higher Education, Nagpur, India, 22 – 25, March 2018,

Dodiković-Jurković V., External Evaluation in Higher Education, 18th Croatian Quality Conference and 9th Scientific Meeting of Croatian Quality Society, Dubrovnik, Croatia, 11-14, April 2018,

Dodiković-Jurković V., ASHE Experience in Implementing ESG 3.4, CEENQA Workshop and 2018 General Assembly, Tirana, Albania, 11 – 12 May, 2018

Dodiković-Jurković V., Quality Assurance System in Higher Education and Science in the Republic of Croatia, education for representatives of the Agency for Control and Quality Assurance of Higher Education of Montenegro, Zagreb, Croatia, 6-7 November 2018.

Dodiković-Jurković V., New Model of External Evaluation and ESG 2015 – New Opportunities, New Challenges, workshop for Higher Education, Zagreb, Croatia, 11 December, 2018

Dorđević M., Support to the development of human resources management system at higher education institutions, dissemination seminar in the project Modernisation of higher education institutions through the promotion of HRMinHEI 2016-2020,

Dorđević M., Professional Orientation as an element of the Quality Assurance System of a Higher Education Institution, Regional Workshop "The Importance of Career Counselling in Higher Education: How to Address the Labour Market Needs?" University of Rijeka, Faculty of Philosophy, Rijeka, Croatia, 5 December, 2018

Grubišić M., Jurić D., New procedure for re-accreditation and the information system MOZVAG, international expert conference "Days of e-Infrastructure DEI 2018", University Computing Centre (SRCE), Zagreb, Croatia, 11 April 2018.

Petrušić I., Academic ranking systems and national evaluation perspectives, Authors' Exposition, National Council for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development, 31 January, 2018.

Petrušić I., Dikić M., Analysis of the five year re-accreditation cycle – biomedicine and health, Round Table discussion "Biomedical Research in Croatia – Situation and Challenges", Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 21 November 2018.

Stanić M., Drvodelić I., Anchoring student credentials to the distributed ledger using zero knowledge proofs, EUNIS 2018, Paris, France 6 June, 2018



6

INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

ASHE's management has long-recognised the need for a functional and developed internal quality assurance system. Today, IQAS is a part of standard good practice and ESG, as well as one of the requirements put before all quality assurance agencies in the European Higher Education Area. ASHE developed an integrated quality assurance system, in line with both ESG and ISO 9001. Internal quality assurance system provides support to further development of business processes, implementation of highest professional standards and maintaining of ASHE's independence and integrity.

ASHE's employees are a reason behind organisational efficiency, which is why we strive to align personal and organisational values and attitudes, in addition to job requirements, thus creating and developing relationships that are perceived as just. As a part of a broader research, in June and July 2018 ASHE conducted a survey on employee satisfaction. Data was collected from ASHE employees via anonymous, voluntary e-questionnaire. The results of this survey were analysed by using quantitative and qualitative statistical methods.

A review of the three-year (2015, 2017 and 2018) estimates of the various aspects of organisational climate showed that ASHE employees assessed with highest grades various professional values and goals, employee development opportunities, and cooperation with the immediate superior, which was, incidentally, the best evaluated question in 2018 survey.

Aspects such as job security, flexibility regarding the use of vacation days / days off, cooperation with the immediate superior and colleagues, received highest satisfaction rates in 2018.

With regard to issues such as communication, cooperation and support within the organisation, the highest grades are consistently given to aspects such as collegiality, freedom to express opinion and flexibility in meeting the needs of users.

User/stakeholder satisfaction with ASHE services is being continuously monitored. ASHE regularly collects feedback via e-questionnaires from all the stakeholders involved in external evaluation procedures (higher education institutions and panel members), on their satisfaction with said procedures carried out by ASHE. In addition, annual questionnaires are also sent to various other groups of stakeholders; feedback is analysed and analyses are used for improvements and observing trends. Shareholders express their satisfaction with ASHE services via email, phone and direct communication at various events organised by ASHE (conferences, workshops, seminars, etc.).

Over the years, the stakeholders consistently expressed a high level of satisfaction with Agency's services.

Feedback shows that they appreciate:

- due to ASHE's diligence and continuous efforts, there was no uncontrolled emergence of new higher education institutions in Croatia
- ASHE's educational activities that actively contribute to the creation of recognisable and competitive Croatian higher education and science, and promote quality as a driving force
- activities carried out through the SKAZVO project, which allow for the development of competencies of different stakeholder groups within the academic community
- the conducting of external evaluation procedures, which encourage the internationalisation of higher education and science, while contributing to the objectivity of the process and the integration of best international practice.

The Agency annually conducts internal audit, evaluating the implementation of ESG and ISO 9001 in everyday work at the level of the whole organisation. A regular internal audit was carried out in the period of 9-18 July 2018, covering all organisational units within ASHE (a total of 10 audits). ASHE management and employees were duly informed about the results of internal audit. In line with its results, suggestions for development were assessed and improvements carried out. Internal audit did not show any nonconformities.

ASHE is also subject to regular external evaluation procedures, conducted by expert panels that evaluate how and to what extent ASHE operates in accordance with ESG and ISO 9001. An external certification body, Det Norske Veritas GL (DNV), conducts annual audits of ASHE in accordance with ISO 9001. In 2018, a re-certification audit was carried out at the level of the entire organisation. The external audit report confirmed that the Agency maintains a high level of conformity to ISO 9001: 2015, and was thus issued a new certificate for a period of three years.

European quality assurance agencies are subject to international external evaluation procedure organised by ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) in 5-year cycles, in order to prove their conformity with Parts II and III of the ESG.

The first such evaluation of ASHE was carried out in 2011, and second in 2016/2017. On account of a positive evaluation report, ASHE's full membership in ENQA was extended by a decision of ENQA Board. Based on the same report, ASHE was re-registered in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

ENQA committee report from 2017 is available on ASHE website:

https://www.azvo.hr/images/stories/publikacije/ENQA_izvje%C5%A1%C4%87e_2017.pdf.

The report was also submitted to the minister of science and education, and members of the Rectors' Conference and Council of Polytechnics and Colleges.

In addition to findings that refer to ASHE's compliance with individual standards and guidelines, the report also contains recommendations for improvement in the following period. For the follow up phase, ASHE submitted its action plan (CLASS: 030-02/16-01/0001, REG.No: 355-01-18-0001, 20 Feb 2018), which ENQA Board fully accepted.

In March 2019, an ENQA expert panel will visit ASHE and assess its activities in the follow up phase, with the aim of providing support for further development. ASHE informed its stakeholders, including MSE and Rectors' Conference, of this procedure.

In June 2018, ENQA Board outlined a programme of visits to all member agencies over the next three years, in an effort to strengthen the existing forms of cooperation. A member of the ENQA Board, Ms Tove Blytt Holmen, visited ASHE in the period 29-31 October, and held a presentation at ASHE conference The future of higher education: quality assurance as a promoter of change. Global, European and Croatian perspectives. At the meeting with Ms Holmen in ASHE, numerous topics were discussed regarding current priorities, challenges and opportunities to strengthen ASHE's position in the national and international context, as well as areas in which additional support by ENQA would be welcomed.

7

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Providing information on the quality of higher education institutions, the higher education system in Croatia and reporting on the activities of the Agency with the aim of promoting the importance of ensuring the quality of higher education and science is part of the mission of the Agency for Science and Higher Education.

In order to achieve this mission, AZVO started the campaign entitled FAKSiranje in early July 2018 with the aim of increasing the visibility and information for future students and their parents, as well as the general public, about transitioning from high school to higher education, types of higher education institutions and study programmes and the importance of accreditation and the selection of quality study programmes. Within the campaign, in cooperation with Student Television from the Faculty of Political Science of the University of Zagreb and students of XV. Gymnasium high school in June, a promotional video spot was set up primarily for the high school population containing useful information on higher education.



Workshop for communication specialists at HEI
(source: University of Zagreb)

Furthermore, AZVO, in co-operation with the EUPRIO (European Universities Public Relations and Information Officers) and the University of Zagreb, organized a workshop for communication specialists at higher education institutions aimed at encouraging higher education institutions to strategically consider communication activities, communicate organisational identity and values, and the recognition of target groups and the high quality of targeted messaging

During 2018, the following activities were also conducted:

- the 2017 Annual Report and the Action Plan for 2018 were published in Croatian and English; submitted to the Croatian Parliament, the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the higher education institutions and other stakeholders in the system of higher education and science and published on the web pages www.azvo.hr
- presented publications: Higher education in the Republic of Croatia: "Guide for members of expert panels in the procedures of evaluation of higher education institutions and scientific organisations" and "What after graduation? Results of research on the employability of students who graduated in the academic year 2015/2017"
- an electronic newsletter of ASHE was published in Croatian and English and delivered to stakeholders and published on web pages and social networks, while printed submissions were submitted to all higher education institutions
- informing higher education institutions on ASHE's activities and news in the Higher Education and Science System
- publishing press releases and sending them to the relevant media and stakeholders
- up-to-date responses to journal inquiries and proactively informing ASHE's activities of announcements, electronic newsletters, etc.
- informing the public and stakeholders through the web site and the social networks of Facebook and Twitter
- communication activities on the SKAZVO and HRMinHEI projects
- organisation of promotional events, conferences and seminars
- in order to increase the international visibility ASHE's news is published in the ENQA, EQAR, CEENQA and INQAAHE newsletters.

PRVI IZBOR Što bi srednjoškolci studirali

Najveća navala na studij logopedije, a popularna je postala i kriminalistika

Logopedija na Edukacijsko-rehabilitacijskom fakultetu Sveučilišta u Zagrebu najtraženiji je studijski program u Hrvatskoj za 2018./2019., objavila je Agencija za znanost i visoko obrazovanje (AZVO).

Za taj studijski program, koji ima 50 mjesta, prijavilo se 675 kandidata, od kojih 254 kandidata, od prvog izbora. Zanimljivo je da je studij logopedije i lani bio najatraktivniji program.

Po podacima Agencije, u ljetnom roku bilo je 34.872 kandidata, a pravo su ostvarila 25.684 kandidata. Među najpoželjnijim programima su u Kriminalistika (stručni) na Visokoj policijskoj školi u Zagrebu, Fizioterapija (stručni) na grebu, Fizioterapija (stručni) na Zdravstvenom veleučilištu u Zagrebu te Medicinski dizajn na Sveučilištu Sjever.



Oni kandidati koji u ljetnom upisnom roku nisu ostvarili pravo upisa na željeni studijski program mogu se prijaviti za jesenski rok na programe na kojima je ostalo slobodnih mjesta i za koje je visoko učilište odlučilo provesti jesenski upisni rok. Najviše slobodnih mjesta na redovnim studijima imaju na Sveučilištu Zima na Sveučilištu (2716), a slijede Sveučilište u Splitu (873), Sveučilište Rijeci (819), Sveučilište J. J. Strossmayera u Osijeku (1074), Sveučilište u Zadru (372), Sveučilište u Puli (622) i Sveučilište u Dubrovniku (229). Iz AZVO-a navode da će prijave za upis na programe u jesenskom roku početi 24. srpnja i trajati do 19. rujna ili do roka koji odredi visoko učilište. Konačne rang-liste za upis u jesenskom roku bit će objavljene 19. rujna. **N.T. Rudež**

VIŠOKE ŠKOLE MORAJU PRATITI PROMJENE U GOSPODARSTVU I DRUŠTVU

Kvaliteta visokog obrazovanja mora biti odgovor na izazove u društvu i gospodarstvu, kaže predsjednik Visokogškolskog savjeta Republike Hrvatske, dr. sc. Zdravko Stanić.



Visokoškolski savjet Republike Hrvatske, koji je osnovan 2013. godine, danas je održao 12. sjednicu. Na sjednici su razmatrali izvješće o radu Visokogškolskog savjeta za prošlu godinu, kao i prijedlog izmjena Statuta Visokogškolskog savjeta Republike Hrvatske. Savjet je također razmatrao prijedlog izmjena Statuta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, kao i prijedlog izmjena Statuta Sveučilišta u Rijeci. Savjet je također razmatrao prijedlog izmjena Statuta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, kao i prijedlog izmjena Statuta Sveučilišta u Rijeci.

Spotom educiraju buduće studente

Kako bi budućim studentima i njihovim roditeljima, ali i široj javnosti, pružila informacije o prijelazu u sustav visokog obrazovanja, vrstama visokih učilišta i studijskih kvalitetnih studijskih programa, Agencija za znanost i visoko obrazovanje (AZVO) izradila je promotivni video spot u suradnji s Televizijom Student i Fakulteta političkih znanosti u Zagrebu i učenicima zagrebačkih XV gimnazija. S obzirom na nedavno predstavljen rezultate istraživanja Agencije i kojima srednjoškolski iskažu ruku na razinu osjećaja informiranosti o prijelazu iz srednje škole u visoko obrazovanje, edukativni video maturantima i budućim studentima.



AZVO osmislio promotivni video

LOGOPEDIJA opet najpoželjniji studij

Oni logopedije, budući studenti najviše su želje pokazali na upisnom na studije kognitivne, funkcionalne, radiološke tehnologije te medicinskog dizajna.



EDUKACIJSKO-KRIMINALISTIKA



Kvaliteta odgovor na izazove visokih učilišta

Kvaliteta visokog obrazovanja mora biti odgovor na izazove u društvu i gospodarstvu, kaže predsjednik Visokogškolskog savjeta Republike Hrvatske, dr. sc. Zdravko Stanić. Visokoškolski savjet Republike Hrvatske, koji je osnovan 2013. godine, danas je održao 12. sjednicu. Na sjednici su razmatrali izvješće o radu Visokogškolskog savjeta za prošlu godinu, kao i prijedlog izmjena Statuta Visokogškolskog savjeta Republike Hrvatske. Savjet je također razmatrao prijedlog izmjena Statuta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, kao i prijedlog izmjena Statuta Sveučilišta u Rijeci. Savjet je također razmatrao prijedlog izmjena Statuta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, kao i prijedlog izmjena Statuta Sveučilišta u Rijeci.

Kvaliteta je odgovor na izazove u hrvatskom visokom obrazovanju

U svijetu visokog obrazovanja, kvaliteta je odgovor na izazove u društvu i gospodarstvu, kaže predsjednik Visokogškolskog savjeta Republike Hrvatske, dr. sc. Zdravko Stanić. Visokoškolski savjet Republike Hrvatske, koji je osnovan 2013. godine, danas je održao 12. sjednicu. Na sjednici su razmatrali izvješće o radu Visokogškolskog savjeta za prošlu godinu, kao i prijedlog izmjena Statuta Visokogškolskog savjeta Republike Hrvatske. Savjet je također razmatrao prijedlog izmjena Statuta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, kao i prijedlog izmjena Statuta Sveučilišta u Rijeci. Savjet je također razmatrao prijedlog izmjena Statuta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, kao i prijedlog izmjena Statuta Sveučilišta u Rijeci.



Visokoškolski savjet Republike Hrvatske

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Kvaliteta je važna! Informiraj se!

Studij u velikoj mjeri može odrediti životni put

10. rujna 2018. u 10h - 12h

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#FAKSiranje

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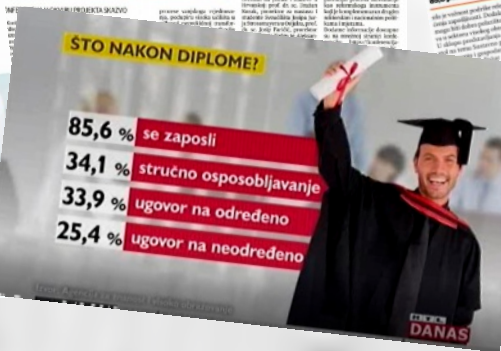
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Jasmina Havarnek, ravnateljica

USKORO PRVE službene rang-ljestvice svih fakulteta u RH

Agencija za znanost i visoko obrazovanje (AZVO) izdaje prve službene rang-ljestvice svih fakulteta u RH. Rang-ljestvice će biti objavljene u rujnu 2018. godine.

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The background is a solid dark gray. In the top right corner, there is a cluster of small, light gray squares, some of which have a white silhouette of a person's head and shoulders. In the bottom left corner, there are several light gray rectangular outlines of varying sizes, some overlapping. A large, white, stylized number '8' is positioned on the left side, partially overlapping a white diagonal band. The band runs from the bottom left towards the top right.

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FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2018

The Agency for Science and Higher Education is a budget beneficiary of the Ministry of Science and Education. In 2018, the Agency had 19 activities in the budget:

- A621155 - Administration and general transactions
- A621179 - National Council for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development
- A621182 - College of Polytechnics and Higher Schools
- A621186 - Evaluation of Scientific Organisations
- A621187 - Evaluation of higher education institutions
- A621190 - External evaluation of the quality assurance system of higher education institutions and scientific organisations
- A621191 - Monitoring the employability of graduated students
- A621192 - Central applications office
- A867004 - Committee for ethics in science and higher education
- K621178 - Equipment and maintenance
- K621194 - National Information System for Applications to Higher Education Institutions
- K867008 - European Social Fund - SKAZVO project (Improvement of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Systems in Higher Education)
- T867003 - IPA RPL - Competitive Croatian Higher Education for Better Employability
- A867005 - Strengthening Professional Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training in Central and South-Eastern Europe (PROCSEE)
- A867006 - BUILDPHE - Building Professional Higher Education Capacity
- A867009 - HRMinHEI Project - Modernisation of Higher Education Institutions through enhancement of Human Resources Management function
- A867002 - EURASHE - Harmonisation of Approaches for Vocational Education in Europe
- A867010 - MEHR - Modernisation, Education and Human Rights
- A867013 - DEQAR - Database of External Quality Assurance Reports

Based on the financial reports, total revenue in 2018 amounted to HRK 24.387.652. It consisted of:

1. State budget resources for 2018: HRK 18.494.259
2. Business revenue: HRK 858.794
3. ESF project - Improvement of Quality Assurance and Project Enhancement Systems in Higher Education (SKAZVO): HRK 4.813.895
4. Other EC funded projects: HRK 206.022
5. Other revenues: HRK 14.682

Total expenditure in 2018 amounted to HRK 23.835.517. It comprised business expenditure in the amount of HRK 22.848.493 and expenditure for acquisition of non-financial assets in the amount of HRK 987.024.

EXPENDITURE		HRK
EXPENDITURE (A+B)		23.835.517
A.	Business expenditure (1+2+3+4)	22.848.493
1.	Staff expenditure	9.244.315
1.1.	Salaries (gross)	7.652.007
1.2.	Salary contributions	1.286.247
1.3.	Other staff costs	306.061
2.	Material costs	13.526.614
2.1.	Travel costs and other remunerations	4.035.998
2.2.	Material and energy expenditure	346.995
2.3.	Service costs	7.974.326
2.4.	Other expenditure not included above	1.169.295
3.	Financial expenditure	64.208
4.	Internship costs	13.356
B.	Acquisition of non-financial assets	987.024

A. Business expenditure:

Item 1. Staff expenditure includes:

- salaries (gross)
- other staff expenditure (gifts for children, severance pay, help after an extended sick leave, etc.).

Item 2. Material costs include:

- Travel costs and other remunerations
- Material and energy expenditure
- Service costs
- Other costs not included above.

Item 2.1. Travel costs and other remunerations that include:

- travel costs for members of expert panels participating in external evaluation procedures (initial accreditation, re-accreditation, thematic evaluation of higher education institutions and research organisation, audits), travel costs for members of ASHE professional bodies, and other external associates and employees, remunerations for transport costs to and from work;
- costs of professional trainings, seminars and other educational programmes.

Item 2.2. Material and energy expenditure includes:

- office materials, energy, materials for current and investment maintenance, small inventory, car tires and other costs

Item 2.3. Service costs includes:

- maintenance of other information systems – Centrix system for administration and data management, IP telephone centre and contact centre, software for financial administration, and other programmes;
- costs of renting (offices, space for seminars, workshops, training courses and committees' sessions, working groups and other bodies);
- intellectual services:
 - temporary work contracts with Croatian and foreign members of expert panels working on external quality assurance procedures implemented by the Agency (initial accreditation, re-accreditation, thematic evaluation of higher education institutions and research organisation, audit);
 - temporary work contracts with members of professional and administrative bodies working with the Agency (members of the Accreditation Council, NCSHETD, Committee for Ethics in Science and Higher Education, scientific field committees, scientific area councils, CPC, and other committees established in accordance with the work plan and as required);
 - student work for Central Applications Office;
- telephone, postage (scientific field committees, ENIC/NARIC, SPU) and transport costs;
- promotion and information services (ASHE Annual report, Analysis of the yearly cycle of re-accreditation of higher education institutions 2010-2015, brochures and materials for conferences, and other Agency events);
- communal services;
- design and printing costs, and other services.
- archiving services.

Item 2.4. Other expenditure not included above that includes:

- costs of the Agency's Management Board
- insurance premium
- membership fees (national and international).

B. Acquisition of non-financial assets:

1. software licences;
2. IT programmes costs (contracts for the maintenance and upgrading of NISpVU system – National Information System for Applications to Study Programmes in Croatia), costs of maintenance and upgrading of the information system MOZVAG;
3. office, computer and communication equipment, equipment for the maintenance of heating and ventilation system, etc.

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ACTIVITY PLAN FOR 2019

ACTIVITY PLAN FOR 2019

- re-accreditation of 27 higher education institutions according to the Re-accreditation Plan which was conducted by the ASHE Accreditation Council and two non-scheduled re-accreditations of higher education institutions
- conducting the re-accreditation of postgraduate university (doctoral) studies, 35 procedures
- conducting the initial accreditation for performing higher education activities according to the requests received
- conducting initial accreditation of study programmes according to the received requests
- conducting the initial accreditation of study programmes in the online environment according to the requests received
- conducting the initial accreditation for carrying out scientific activities according to the requests received
- conducting audit according to the Plan issued by the Accreditation Council (4 higher education institutions)
- conducting the thematic evaluation according to the requests received
- conducting the activities of the Strategy of Education Science and Technology
- supporting higher education institutions in the conducting of CROQF and the new ESG
- completing the reconstruction of the MOZVAG system
- developing a new procedure of initial accreditation harmonized with the CROQF
- monitoring satisfaction and employment of graduate students
- providing professional and administrative support to the work of the strategic and expert bodies in the system of science and higher education (NSCHETD, Committee of Ethics in Science and Higher Education, Council of Polytechnics and Colleges, Field Committees for Appointment to Scientific-Teaching and Teaching Grades at Polytechnics and Colleges, Scientific Field Committees for Appointment to Scientific Grades, Scientific and Artistic Area Councils, and the Science and Higher Education Funding Council)
- participating in ongoing international projects and applying for new projects
- human resources development - lifelong learning (education of ASHE employees)
- educational activities - education of expert panels conducting external evaluation procedures, thematic education of higher education institutions and scientific organisations, organisation of conferences, seminars and workshops
- regular activities of the national network of QA units at higher education institutions
- improvement of the internal ASHE quality assurance system in accordance with the valid ESGs, ISO 9001 standards and new external evaluation models

- active participation in the development of the national information system of higher education and science
- updating Knowledge Base
- informing about the conditions of registration, deadlines and other relevant information on applying for and obtaining the right to enrol in study programmes (through the web site Become a student, the official web site of the Central Applications Office and the information provided to candidates directly addressing the inquiries of the Central Applications Office)
- collection of documentation and personal data input and grading in the National Information System for applicants of higher education institutions who have completed high school education before 2010 or outside the Republic of Croatia in order to compete on the rank of list of study programmes with candidates from the regular education system of the Republic of Croatia
- conducting of the application process for integrated undergraduate and graduate study programmes of higher education institutions in Croatia
- conducting a centralized application for graduate study programmes
- creating rankings based on credits achieved according to the terms of entry of study programmes for candidates applying for study programmes with the aim of enrolling in higher education institutions in the Republic of Croatia
- collecting and analysing data of candidates outside the regular education system in Croatia enrolling in the first grade of secondary school
- providing information on the national education system, foreign education systems and recognition of foreign higher education qualifications
- providing information on the recognition of foreign qualifications
- recognition of foreign higher education qualifications
- collecting and analysing data in order to develop statistics and system-level analysis along with trend tracking
- active cooperation with external stakeholders (MSE, The Education Science and Culture Committee of the Croatian Parliament, Croatian Rectors Conference, CPC, State Archives, Croatian Employment Service, Ministry of Public Administration, etc.)
- cooperation with public and private sector institutions as well as with non-governmental and non-profit organisations
- providing IT support to ASHE business processes
- exchange of experts in the field of higher education and science
- presentation at expert conferences
- informing the public about ASHE's activities
- promotional activities

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASHE – Agency for Science and Higher Education

CAO – Central Applications Office

CEENQA –Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

CPC – Council of Polytechnics and Colleges

CROQF – Croatian Qualifications Framework

ECA – European Consortium for Accreditation

EHEA – European Higher Education Area

ENIC – European Network of National Information Centres on academic recognition and mobility

ENQA – European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

EQAR – European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education

ESG – Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

FC – Field Committee

MSE – Ministry of Science and Education

NARIC – National Academic Recognition Information Centres

NCHS – National Council for Higher Education

NCS – National Council for Science

NCSHETD – National Council for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development

NISpVU – National Information System of Application to Higher Education Institutions

QAS – Quality Assurance System

SFC – Scientific Field Committee

ARFEQ- Act on the Recognition of Foreign Educational Qualifications

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