# 2012 | 2013 Annual Report | Work Plan

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# Airector's introduction | D1



Prof. dr. sc. Jasmina Havranek, Agency for Science and Higher Education director

It is a pleasure to present you with another Agency for Science and Higher Education Annual Report.<sup>1</sup>
Looking back on 2012, we can say it was an unusually challenging year - however, judging by the number of projects to be completed in 2013, the year ahead of us will not be any different.

The past year was primarily marked by the continuing re-accreditation procedures in Croatian higher education. The second round of re-accreditation, carried out on higher education institutions delivering programmes in technological sciences, showed that the institutions are becoming increasingly aware of the benefits of the procedure. They are accepting it as an opportunity for self-evaluation, in full understanding that they are the ones responsible for the quality of the programmes they deliver. The institutions participated in the procedures with remarkable professionalism, cooperativeness and responsibility, with positive developments most readily visible in the promptness of adopting action plans for concrete improvements.

Developing responsible partnerships with institutions, in 2012 we enlarged the scope of our training services and improved our criteria.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Agency for Science and Higher Education Management Board adopted this Annual Report and Work Plan at its 33<sup>rd</sup> session held on March 19<sup>th</sup> 2013.

We also evaluated the re-accreditation procedure itself, through surveys and direct communication with institutional representatives and the Accreditation Council, which resulted in precious feedback for our work.

Since 2009, when the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education redefined the role of our Agency and launched our current external quality assurance procedures, we have emphasised the importance of partnership with higher education institutions and scientific organisations. Looking back, we can say that we have indeed achieved a relationship of partnership, and a fruitful one.

We often mention that the primary role of accreditation is to guarantee the reliability of higher education qualifications and enable mobility among higher education institutions. In the context of national and international mobility, accreditation is thus a quality indicator of the institutions, both sending and receiving ones, for students as well as for teachers. This segment of our work requires additional emphasis now that Croatia is about to join the European Union, also because one of the repeated findings of our site visits to Croatian institutions is precisely the untapped potential of internationalisation in higher education.

After joining the European Union, Croatian qualifications, or, rather, knowledge and competences, will become equal competitors in a market of over 500 million people, with quality as the only criterion. The same will become true for the attractiveness of our higher education institutions to foreign students and teachers. Good results - those which will increase competitiveness and thus contribute to the whole society - can only be achieved if we work in synergy among all stakeholders in science and higher education, as well as in business, and only if the policy makers are able to set clear strategic goals.

In the context of international positioning, this was a particularly fruitful year for our Agency. After less than a year of full membership in the main European umbrella organisations for quality assurance in higher education - ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) and EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education) - Agency was recognised a strong partner to our European colleagues. Two countries, Lithuania and Latvia, invited us to participate in external quality assurance procedures at their higher education institutions.

The USA national organisation for quality assurance in higher education, CHEA (Council for Higher Education Accreditation) invited us to hold a lecture to the CHEA International Quality Group, which we have recently joined, on the topic of Higher Education Systems in Transition: Quality Assurance in Central and Eastern Europe, with a special emphasis on Croatia.

At the end of 2012, we hosted ENQA president, dr. Achim Hopbach, who emphasised that we have reasons to be proud, as we are the only agency in the region which managed to internationally position itself with such success. This was an additional motivation for achieving our goals, of which in 2013 there are indeed many - from re-accrediting all public research institutes in Croatia, to reaccrediting nine higher education institutions from the biotechnological field and fourteen private ones, completing all the procedures started in the last year, and much more, as you will learn on the pages that follow.

We were also invited by the *German Academic Exchange Service* (DAAD) and the *German Accreditation Council* (GAC) to Berlin, to participate in the international conference *Quality Assurance and Quality Development* in March 2013 and present the Croatian

system of external quality assurance in science and higher education. This invitation honoured our agency as one among six European countries given the opportunity to present its national agency and its work.

In addition to this, in June 2013 we are organising the 20th ENIC and NARIC Annual Conference in Split, and the month before will see us participating in the organisation of the 23rd of EURASHE (*European Association of Higher Education Institutions*) Annual Conference, also in Split. Finally, in cooperation with the Embassy of Israel in Croatia we are organising an academic seminar *Excellence in education: a motor for research and innovation*, to be held in April 2013 at the University of Zagreb. The seminar will gather renowned lectures - Israeli and Croatian academics, researchers and businessmen - to discuss the best practices of Israel's technology transfer system and its strategic development of business and research, using it as an example to discuss the future development of Croatian science as the motor of economic growth.

I would like to use the opportunity to thank all the representatives of higher education institutions and scientific organisations who participated or will participate in our external quality assurance procedures, as well as all members of our expert panels - those from Croatia, and especially those from abroad - almost two hundred people, most of whom come from top institutions globally and always readily accept our invitations for cooperation. I also thank all the higher education and scientific institutions for great cooperation, particularly university senates that recognised the Agency as a source of support in improving the whole higher education system, and the Rectors' Conference, whose cooperation we find particularly important. We are especially indebted to students from all higher education institutions who have participated in the external quality assurance procedures, as well as those who have worked at the Agency and, judging by the quality of their work, managed to become true professionals.

At the end, I would like to thank the Agency staff, a huge majority of whom hold higher education qualifications, for performing their demanding tasks diligently and responsibly, with constant ambition and desire for learning and improvement. Without them, we would have never been able to achieve such good results, with all the stress that sometimes accompanied them.

Thank you all!

Prof. dr. sc. Jasmina Havranek,

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Director of the Agency for Science and Higher Education

External quality assurance procedures in science and higher education implemented in 2012 02

Re-accreditation

#### Re-accreditation of higher education institutions in the academic year 2011/12

Re-accreditation of higher education institutions is a procedure implemented in five-year cycles. All public and private universities, polytechnics and colleges in Croatia undergo re-accreditation in the scope of a single cycle.

In line with the Higher Education Institutions Re-accreditation Procedure, the Agency for Science and Higher Education fulfilled its obligations listed in the Higher Education Institutions Re-accreditation Plan for the academic year 2011/12. This involved reaccrediting 32 higher education institutions - 19 faculties, 3 university departments, 6 polytechnics and 4 colleges, all of which deliver programmes in technological sciences.

The re-accreditation procedure for higher education institutions also included re-accreditation of scientific activity for 24 higher education institutions listed in the Register of Scientific Organisations.

The expert panels involved Croatian and foreign academics, hired on the basis of a public call published on the Agency website. Each higher education institution undergoing re-accreditation was requested to confirm the composition of the expert panel, and file possible complaints. The re-accreditation procedures in the academic year 2011/12 thus involved 35 foreign experts employed at renowned European higher education institutions. The Agency organised trainings for expert panels' members, aimed at introducing them to the Croatian higher education system and the details of the re-accreditation procedure. The Agency also continuously trains its staff - coordinators in the re-accreditation procedures. In addition to that, the Agency provides all necessary technical, administrative and professional support to all the participants in the procedures.

The institutions undergoing re-accreditation were required to draft a self-evaluation of their work in the past five years, using a form prepared by the Agency. Each re-accreditation procedure also included a site visit, with the expert panel and the coordinator from the Agency spending 1 to 3 days on the re-accredited institution. During the site visit, all expert panel members were taking notes on the institution, as well as checking if it met the Criteria for Quality Assessment of Polytechnics and Colleges, or Institutions within Universities, depending on the type of the institution. During the last day of each site visit, all panel members drafted a report which contained the quality grade, awarded on the basis of the documents submitted by the institution and the site visit findings. The final versions of the reports were normally submitted to the Agency within a month after the site visit.

The institutions had the possibility of commenting on the reports, an opportunity used by some of them. Both the comments and the final versions of the reports served as a basis for the opinion of the Accreditation Council. This independent body of the Agency adopts an independent opinion, either on issuing the confirmation on compliance with conditions for continued activity of higher education

or a part of such activity, or issuing a letter of expectations with a three-year deadline, or, if neither recommendation can be made, on issuing a licence denial. The final accreditation recommendation is made only after the institution has had the opportunity to comment on the opinion issued by the Council. In addition to the expert panel report and the institution's comments, the Council also bases their opinion on the analysis of the conditions in which the institution performs its teaching activities.

All final re-accreditation reports were discussed and accreditation recommendations adopted at the Council sessions. In the accreditation recommendations adopted so far, continued activity was recommended for 21 higher education institutions and two university departments. Letters of expectations were issued for five higher education institutions, and licence denial was issued to three higher education institutions and one university department, which received notices inviting them to submit any objections to the recommendation. Licence denials were also recommended for two dislocated study programmes.

The final quality grades for institutions are public, and the reports have been published on the Agency website.

After the re-accreditation procedure was completed, the institutions as well as panel members which participated in the June 2012 procedures received a questionnaire on their opinions on the procedure. Institutional representatives also participated in a session of the Accreditation Council, during which they were able to comment on the procedure. Their input was used to revise the documents used in the procedure, and the final version of the new documentation was adopted at the Council session held in September 2012.

**01** Panel members' and institutions' assessment of the 2012 re-accreditation procedures

Number	Segment assessed (1 = unsatisfactory, 5 = highly satisfactory)	Members of the expert panels	Institutions
1.	Documentation (procedure, standards, criteria, self-evaluation report)	4,15	4,02
a)	Clarity of the procedure	4,25	4,33
b)	Clarity of the standards and criteria	4,00	3,83
c)	Applicability of the standards and criteria	3,88	3,83
d)	Clarity of the self-evaluation report guidelines	4,5	4,00
e)	Quality of the guidelines for drafting the final report	4,13	4,17
2.	Cooperation with the Agency	4,75	4,67
a)	Quality of the information provided prior to the procedure	4,75	4,67
3.	Training of the expert panel members	4,21	4,72
a)	Quality of the training	3,75	4,67
b)	Usefulness of the training	4,37	4,67
4.	Quality of the discussion of the self-evaluation and site visit preparations	4,75	4,83
a)	General assessment	4,37	4,29
b)	Documentation (procedure, standards, criteria, self-evaluation report)	4,50	4,33
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Preparations were started for the higher education institutions' re-accreditation in the academic year 2012/13. The plan for the year, adopted by the Accreditation Council, includes 9 higher education institutions delivering programmes in biotechnology and 16 private institutions. In October 2012 the Agency organised a workshop for these institutions, aimed at preparing the self-evaluation reports.

In order to improve the information flow and provide support in drafting the self-evaluation reports, the Agency opened a forum on its website, which enables an open communication between institutional representatives and the Agency. In the same month, the Agency published a public call for experts in the re-accreditation procedure aimed at academics, students and members of the business community. The call was also published at the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) website and sent to other European agencies the Agency is cooperating with.

Site visits will take place in March, April and May 2013.

#### Re-accreditation of higher education institutions in the academic year 2010/11: synthesis

The Synthesis of the re-accreditation of higher education institutions in the 2012/11 academic year completed the re-accreditation procedure for the 18 institutions delivering programmes in economics. The Synthesis lists the main features of the re-accredited institutions, general comments provided by the expert panels and the data relevant for the higher education system, and was published on the Agency website.

The scientific field of economics has the largest relative number of study programmes - 167, out which 106 are university programmes, and 61 are professional. This is relevant for the future direction of policies and strategies for higher education in this field. It is necessary to create a detailed analysis of labour market needs, together with the desirable learning outcomes which should be integrated into the study programmes. The outcomes of university and professional programmes should be clearly differentiated. The current ratio of university and professional programmes would indicate that at the national level, education in this field is primarily aimed at developing future research potential.

The portion of the total number of students taken up by this field brings additional responsibility for maintaining the quality requirements, as this field also represents a significant portion of the academic community and the labour market. The fact that this field effectively takes up a third of the Croatian higher education system, taking into account the number of students as well as the number of programmes, and thus a similar portion of the workforce with higher education qualifications, indicates the importance of further strategic developments and analyses of the higher education in economics.

With certain exceptions, the expert panels' reports indicated a high degree of homogeneity between the university and professional

programmes at the national level. In five out of seven categories the average implementation grade was *mostly implemented*, and the lowest grades were given to scientific and professional activity for university programmes, professional and research activity for professional programmes, and mobility and international cooperation.

Disregarding the differences among the two types of institutions, it is possible to see that most criteria for professional programmes were assessed to be *mostly implemented*, while the equivalent grades for university programmes were *partly implemented*. This indicates that panels considered the professional programmes to be more advantageous.

The potential and the strength of the institutions delivering professional programmes in the field is the very concept of these programmes, as well as their teachers, with most criteria concerning these two factors assessed as *mostly implemented*, save for one institution. According to the reports, this grade is primarily a result of the work of enthusiastic and professional young academics at university departments, together with systematic efforts aimed at improving their teaching competences.

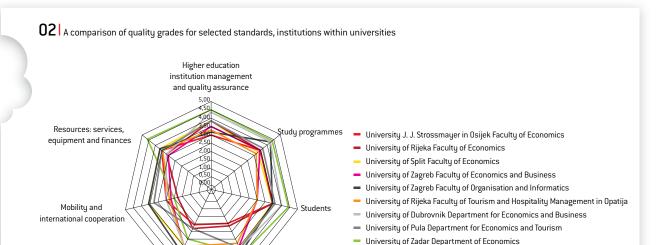
The panels agree that the advantages of each re-accredited institution need to be further developed as to increase the differentiation and diversity of the numerous study programmes in the field, with regard to the size of the national academic community and the labour market

All panels agree on the lack of international recognisability, both of the study programmes and the research done at the institutions. The study programmes are not sufficiently attractive to foreign students, and too few students pursue study periods abroad. The research suffers from the overt teaching brought about by large admission quotas and the resulting number of students, and too few scientific papers are published that satisfy international quality criteria.

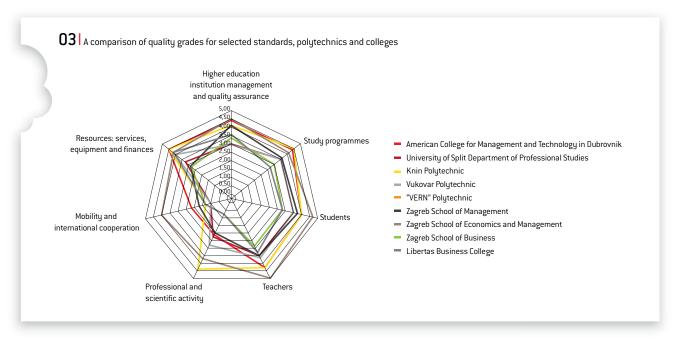
The reports agree that the admission policies need to be revised to better reflect the labour market needs, meaning that they should also include some form of graduate tracking and cooperation with alumni. This should also be connected to revisions of the study programmes, so that their content can be adapted to the societal needs regarding the higher education in this field.

The panels have noticed that the teacher-student ratio exceeds the European average, and on some institutions it is even above 1:30, which is the legal maximum required by the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions. This inspired a national debate on the links between an unfavourable teacher-student ratio and institutional quality, prompting the Agency to discuss the adverse consequences of such a ratio in a text published on its website.

One of the most important conclusions was that, concerning both the assessment of institutions delivering study programmes and the method it involves, the re-accreditation procedure ensures the reliability of the Croatian higher education system and successfully fosters innovations in the field of assessing academic quality. This model of assessment represents an excellent example of cooperation between the state and the academia, as well as a reliable and accountable self-regulation.



Teachers



Professional and

scientific activity

#### Re-accreditation of scientific organisations

Preparation of the documentation for re-accreditation of scientific organisations was based on the experiences the Agency gained while preparing, delivering and assessing thematic evaluations in science, as well as the results of those evaluations. The draft document of Principles and Criteria for Evaluation of Scientific Organisations in the Republic of Croatia was prepared. This document serves as a basis for the remaining documentation necessary to perform a re-accreditation of scientific organisations. While drafting the document, Agency analysed the current policies and recent experience of similar European agencies and other institutions performing evaluations of scientific activities (in Spain, Denmark, Netherlands and Germany). The document also includes innovative evaluation guidelines, primarily focused around the novel approach of evaluating outcomes of scientific activities and their social impact. Before completion, the document was sent for review to four renowned international scientists, and to public discussion which resulted in several dozens of recommendations for amendments submitted by the stakeholders in the system of higher education and science.

The procedure of drafting this document, as well as the documentation connected to it (Re-accreditation Procedure for Public Research Institutes, Re-accreditation Procedure for Private Scientific Organisations and Other Legal Persons, Self-Evaluation Template, Guidelines for Drafting the Final Report) was done in cooperation with representatives of all stakeholders in the field of science and higher education. These representatives were gathered in a 25-member working group. The documents should be adopted by March 2013, and the re-accreditation procedures in science are to be launched during the spring of 2013.

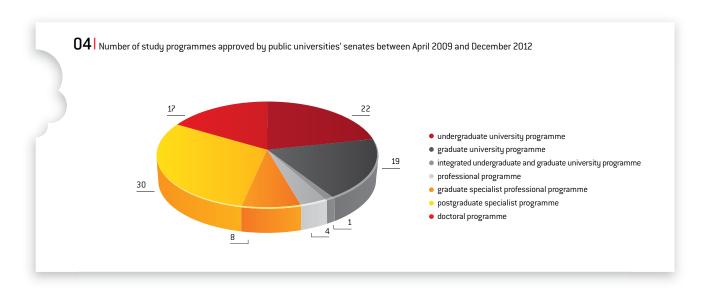
Following the request of the Science, Education and Sports Minister, in December 2012 the Accreditation Council amended the Scientific Organisations Re-accreditation Plan for 2013, adding 25 public research institutes.

# Thematic evaluation

## Thematic evaluation of compliance to minimal conditions within the procedure of approving new study programmes of public universities

In 2012, the Agency performed a thematic evaluation aimed at checking the compliance to the minimal conditions (listed in the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity) for delivering study programmes and re-accrediting higher education institutions within the procedure of licensing new study programmes at public universities.

The thematic evaluation showed that public universities approved the delivery of 101 new study programmes in the period between April 2009, when the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education was enacted, allowing them to self-accredited study programmes, and December 2012. Detailed information on the thematic evaluation can be found in the final report which is being adopted by the Accreditation Council.



#### Thematic evaluation of study programmes for regulated professions in healthcare

The need to evaluate study programmes leading to qualifications necessary to perform regulated professions in healthcare arose from the European Union requirement for compliance of these professions and their regulation with the *acquis communautaire*. In June 2012, a peer assessment mission for the field visited Croatia to assess the current state of affairs in four regulated professions in healthcare. The mission, one among the European Commission initiatives, served as an instrument to assess the progress in aligning the Croatian legal system with the EU's *acquis communautaire*. The conclusions of the mission were summarised in an official note by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration and submitted to the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Agency and other competent bodies.

In order to produce a progress report, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports requested the Agency to perform a thematic evaluation on the alignment of professional and university programmes for regulated professions in healthcare (nursing, obstetrics, medicine, dental medicine and pharmacy) with the provisions of the European Parliament Directive 2005/36/EC and the Council for Recognition of Regulated Professions.

Study programmes in healthcare were divided in six groups: nursing - professional programmes, nursing - university programmes, dental medicine, obstetrics and pharmacy. Each of these groups is evaluated by three independent international reviewers, from the perspective of their alignment with the mentioned Directive. The higher education institutions submitted their programmes for review. At the end of the procedure, the reviews will be submitted to the Accreditation Council, which will appoint a committee to draft the final report for this evaluation.

Finally, the report, together with review reports, will be submitted to the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports..

#### Thematic evaluation of doctoral programmes

The need to evaluate doctoral study programmes was indicated by the problems noticed by the members of expert panels participating in the external quality assurance procedures completed so far - thematic evaluation of public research institutes and re-accreditation of higher education institutions.

The procedure was launched upon a request by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, and should be carried out within half a year. In line with the relevant regulations, the procedure includes a decision by the Accreditation Council, notification to the institution, appointment of the expert panel and training, data submission and evaluation, report drafting, institutional comments and the final report.

In line with the Ministry proposal, an expert committee was composed of directors of major scientific institutes, vice-rectors for science from public universities and Agency representatives. The Agency developed benchmarks on the basis of relevant documents (Salzburg Principles, European University Association Recommendations for Doctoral Programmes, and the Bologna Follow-up Group documents) to enable assessment of the doctoral programmes in comparison to international standards. After receiving the data and performing the evaluation, the panel appointed by the Accreditation Council will draft a report to be submitted to the expert committee for further discussion on the potential needs for further doctoral programmes' reform.

The outcome of the evaluation will be a final report of the Accreditation Council containing recommendations for potential reforms.

#### Thematic evaluation of public research institutes: synthesis

The procedure of thematic evaluation of public research institutes, started in 2011, was officially completed with the adoption of the synthesis by the Accreditation Council, in April 2012.

The evaluation had been launched on the basis of the Republic of Croatia strategic document *Strategic Development Framework 2006* created by the Central Office for Development Strategy and Coordination of EU Funds (CODEF), which lists the reorganisation of public research institutes and universities among the goals, as well as the *Economic Recovery Plan* (issued by Croatian government in April 2010) which aimed at strengthening Croatian research potentials. The evaluation of the 25 public research institutes was launched primarily in order to collect the relevant data and develop a comprehensive insight in the scope of activities of these institutions.

The three main segments of the evaluation were:

- focus of the scientific activity (justifiability and distinctiveness of independent functioning, target groups of users and institutional products),
- sources of funding and their use (efficiency of the equipment and facilities),
- 🕏 organisation and management (governance, planning and quality management).

The synthesis of the thematic evaluation was published on the Agency website, and contains a summary of the methodology used, comparison of institutes according to financial, staff and research activity indicators, and a conclusion listing recommendations for improvement.

Although the public research institutes differ by their size and scientific fields, the reports on individual institutes contain a number of conclusions and strategic recommendations aimed at improving the whole system of science and higher education in the Republic of Croatia.

All panel reports indicate the necessity to develop a national strategy for science and research, and, within this context, suggest streamlining funds and energy on selected fields of strategic importance. Without a clear plan and focus, the system remains segmented, underfunded, without clearly profiled centres of excellence, which also results in unclear missions, visions and remits of public research institutes.

In order to develop their full capacity, the institutes should invest further efforts in strengthening their recognisability and assuring the public trust, improving the infrastructure for economic growth and employment through *spin-off* companies in technology and biotechnology, and networking with foreign scientists and teachers as well as entrepreneurs, foreigners and Croats working abroad.

As a segment of thematic evaluation, cooperation was generally assessed as insufficient. There is a lot of variety at the national level in this regard, as cooperation was assessed as excellent on some institutes. The institutes with good results in national and international cooperation are very important for national interests. International cooperation was assessed as average or below-average on all institutions, which impacts Croatian positioning in the European Research Area and the attractiveness of national institutes to foreign researchers.

The panels considered the scientific production of public institutes, although satisfactory according to the national criteria for project funding and staff promotion, largely insufficient for significant international recognisability. Most panels found that the low quality level of the publications has its source primarily in the national staff promotion criteria, which are quantitative (the number of publications is taken into account), in comparison to qualitative international criteria (publishing in renowned journals with high impact factors). The insufficient amount of applied research results in few patents and other forms of intellectual property, which is then reflected in the applicability of research and the economy in general. The data delivered by the institutes regarding the period under consideration mention very few patents and other forms of copyright. The panels evaluating the institutes working in social sciences and humanities concluded that they do not sufficiently perform fundamental research and lack relevant international publications.

All panels described national project funding as faulty, and agreed that the criteria used by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports are not sufficiently strict. Funds are awarded to most projects, which results in insufficient funding per project. Most researchers would support a more selective procedure, funding only relevant projects. Clear and selective criteria should be defined. An increase in project funding would enable the most successful researchers to limit the number of commercial projects, which are currently necessary to fund their scientific work. This would also equip them with the experience of participating in competitive project funding, useful in applying to EU-funded projects. Foreign experts have also recommended establishing a common office which would be shared by institutes and dedicated to administrative tasks supporting research. Such an office would be tasked with applying to EU-funded projects: providing expert advice, taking care of the administrative tasks, supporting institutes in cutting overall costs of applying to external sources of funding, and enabling sharing of administrative as well as equipment and other costs.

#### Thematic evaluation of private scientific organisations and other legal persons

Thematic evaluation of private scientific organisations and other legal persons working in science was launched by the Agency to check the compliance to minimal conditions listed in the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Scientific Activity and Re-Accreditation of Scientific Institutions. The procedure identified the organisations which were not able to comply with the Ordinance in developing documentation (strategic research programmes) or in meeting the minimal conditions for performing scientific activity (the minimal number of research staff employed). Report on this evaluation was published on the Agency website and forwarded to the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports. The findings can serve to revise the Register of Scientific Organisations, and prepare the re-accreditation procedure for private scientific organisations and other legal persons working in science.

Although the evaluation was not aimed at checking the re-accreditation criteria, the worrisome finding is that these would be met by only 5 institutions if the sufficient number of scientific staff is concerned.

Taking into account the findings of this evaluation, as well as the fact that private organisations and other legal persons' scientific activity can be re-accredited only if funded by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, it is necessary to perform additional analyses based on accurate financial data submitted by the Ministry, which should participate in establishing the procedure for reaccrediting such activities.



#### Initial accreditation in higher education

Initial accreditation of new study programmes and newly established higher education institutions was launched in June 2012, after the Croatian Parliament adopted the strategic document developed by the National Council for Higher Education, the *Network of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes*. Compliance to this strategic document is checked as a first step of the initial accreditation procedure.

By the end of 2012, 26 requests were submitted by institutions, 1 for establishing a new college and the rest for launching new programmes at polytechnics and colleges. On the basis of the procedures and opinions issued by the Accreditation Council, the Agency recommended to the Minister of Science, Education and Sports to approve 9 new study programmes, and deny licence for 6 of them. The remaining procedures are ongoing.

#### Initial accreditation for carrying out scientific activity

The initial accreditation for carrying out scientific activity (establishing scientific organisations, i.e. being listed in the Register of Scientific Organisations) is performed for all public and private organisations which wish to receive public research funding and register as scientific organisations.

The Agency received and processed two such requests in 2012. Currently only private scientific organisations can submit a request for initial accreditation, while the public ones will be able to do so after the Croatian Parliament adopts the strategic document of the *Network of Public Scientific Organisations*, produced by the National Council for Science.

Justifiability of public funding of new study programmes at public universities

The Agency passes an opinion on the justifiability of public funding of new study programmes at public universities, set up by their senates, on the basis of their alignment with the *Network of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes*.

The procedure was launched in June 2012, after the *Network* strategic document was implemented. On the basis of the eight requests received, the Agency adopted a positive opinion on providing additional public funds for four study programmes (for three programmes the opinions could not be passed due to lack of information submitted, while the procedure was stopped for one study programmes because the applying institution was issued a letter of expectations in the re-accreditation procedure).

# External audit of higher education institutions' quality assurance systems

External audit is performed by the Agency in order to establish the efficiency and the degree of development of internal quality assurance systems at higher education institutions.

In 2012 the procedure was completed for seven out of nine institutions included in the 2011 Audit Annual Plan. There were no complaints on the outcomes of the procedures. Final grades awarded to the audited systems are shown in Chart 5.

05 Efficiency grades for internal QA systems included in the 2011 Audit Plan, according to the ESG and Agency Audit Criteria

Higher education institution	ESG 1.1.	ESG 1.2.1.	ESG 1.2.2.	ESG 1.3.	ESG 1.4.	ESG 1.5.	ESG 1.6.	ESG 1.7.
University of Dubrovnik	initial/deve- loped phase	developed phase	developed phase	developed phase	developed phase	developed phase	developed phase	developed phase
University of Zagreb Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing	initial/ developed phase	advanced phase	developed/ advanced phase	advanced phase	developed/ advanced phase	advanced phase	developed phase	advanced phase
College of Agriculture in Križevci	developed phase	developed phase	developed phase	developed phase	developed phase	developed phase	initial/ deve- loped phase	developed phase
University of Zagreb Faculty of Organization and Informatics	initial/ developed phase	advanced phase	developed phase	advanced phase	developed phase	developed phase	developed phase	developed/ advanced phase
University of Rijeka Academy of Applied Arts	initial/ developed phase	initial/ developed phase	initial phase	developed/ advanced phase	developed phase	developed phase	developed phase	advanced phase
University of Rijeka Faculty of Engineering	developed phase	developed phase	developed phase	developed phase	developed phase	developed/ advanced phase	developed phase	advanced phase
Algebra University College for Applied Computer Engineering	developed phase	advanced phase	advanced phase	advanced phase	developed/ advanced phase	developed/ advanced phase	developed/ advanced phase	advanced phase
University of Zagreb School of Medicine			In the audit phase IV - drafting the final report					
Slavonski Brod Polytechnic			In the audit phase IV - drafting the final report					

The efficiency of the internal quality assurance system of the University of Rijeka Academy of Applied Arts was assessed with a transitory grade - between the initial and the developed phase - which prompted the Accreditation Council to adopt the recommendation of the expert panel and request a repeated external audit within 18 months. The remaining institutions' systems were assessed as developed, which enabled them to receive certificates.

The 2012 Annual Audit Plan includes nine institutions: six universities (in Pula, Rijeka, Zadar, Osijek, Split and Zagreb) and three polytechnics (in Rijeka, Velika Gorica and Požega). One university (in Split) requested the site visit to be postponed to spring 2013. Site visits to the remaining eight institutions were held during 2012. First reports were created for five institutions, which are currently in the follow-up phase. The remaining three reports will be completed in 2013, so by the beginning of the year these institutions can enter the follow-up phase. In 2013 we expect to complete the procedures for all institutions covered by the 2012 Annual Plan, as well as for the two institutions covered by the 2011 Plan, and adopt and publish all the reports on the Agency website.

At its 28<sup>th</sup> session, held on June 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, the Accreditation Council adopted the 2013 Annual Audit Plan which includes six polytechnics: Marko Marulić Polytechnic in Knin, Nikola Tesla Polytechnic in Gospić, Polytechnic in Šibenik, Polytechnic in Varaždin, Vern University of Applied Sciences and University of Applied Health Studies in Zagreb.

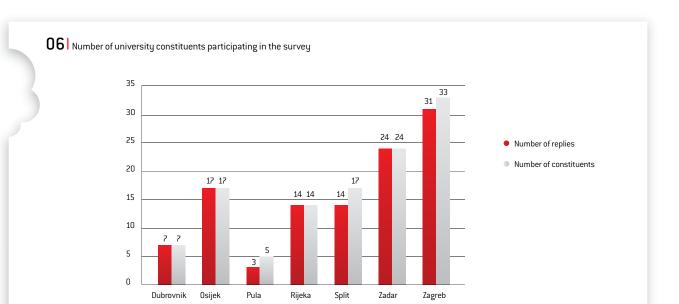
Agency activities include data collection and production of analyses on development and effectiveness of higher education institutions' internal quality assurance systems.

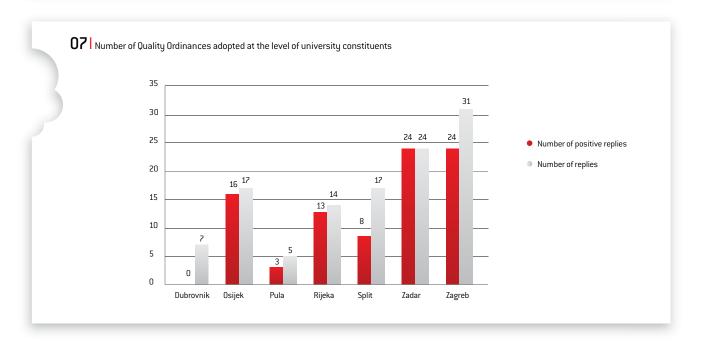
In May 2012, the Agency sent out a questionnaire to collect data on the organisation and effectiveness of internal quality assurance systems at public and private higher education institutions in Croatia:

- 150 internal quality assurance units were established at institutions
   (at integrated universities, university departments and libraries are included),
- 126 ordinances and 57 manuals were adopted,
- 108 students have been actively involved in internal quality assurance bodies,
- 💰 35 businesspeople have been actively involved in internal quality assurance bodies.

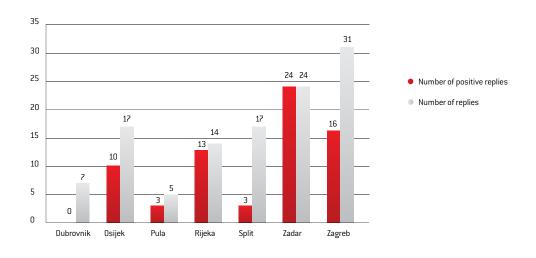
Regarding universities, the following information was received:

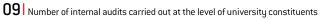
- s a strategy has not been adopted by those in Zagreb and Split,
- 💰 ordinances have been adopted by all, manual has not been adopted by the university of Split,
- universities in Zadar and Pula carried out internal audits.

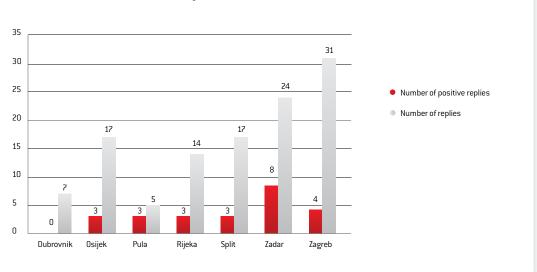




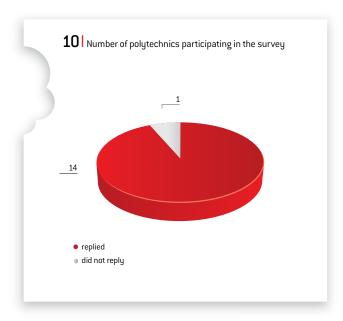


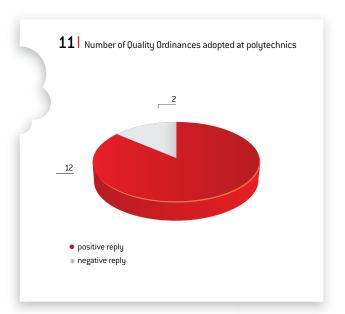


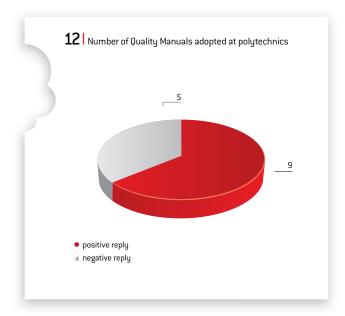


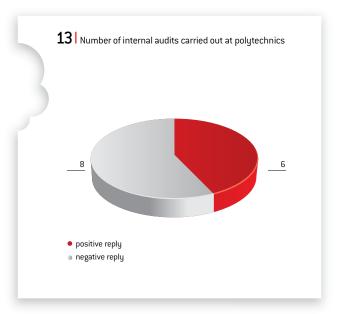


#### Polytechnics' survey analysis

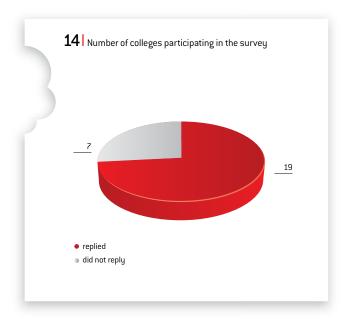


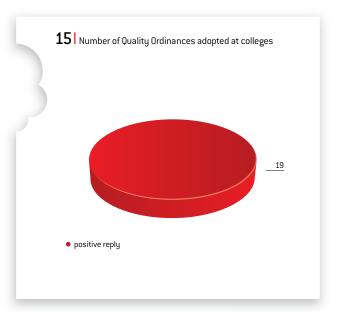


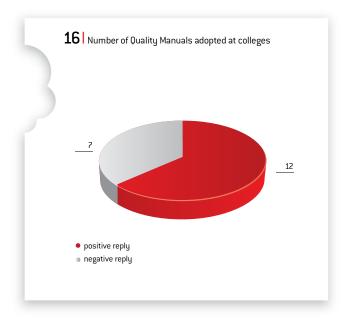


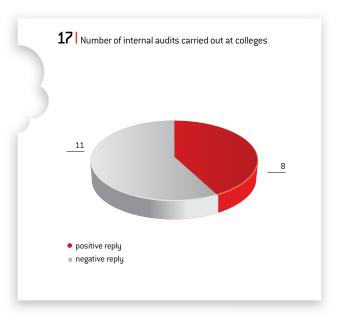


#### Colleges' survey analysis









The number of internal audits carried out so far indicates that two thirds of the internal quality assurance systems are still not fully functional. The higher education system still has to develop awareness of the importance of internal and external quality assurance, and recognise the added value of the established systems as a basis for the development of the self-assessment culture, on the level of the individual, the study programme, and the whole institution.

In 2012 we continued to support the development and improvement of quality culture, as well the relationships with our partners, stakeholders in the system. We organized trainings at the institutions which invited us. Quality improvement is possible only when all stakeholders are actively cooperating and building positive attitudes on the importance of systematic quality assurance.

Professional and administrative support to strategic and expert bodies in the system of science and higher education

03

# National councils for higher education and science

In 2011 the Agency continued to provide support to strategic and expert bodies in the system of science and higher education, organising and preparing sessions of these bodies, drafting minutes and conclusions, following their implementation and drafting analyses and reports.

By ensuring successful functioning of these bodies, the Agency also indirectly contributes to better quality of the system of science and higher education, which is the key component of its mission.

In 2012 the Agency organized 8 National Council for Higher Education sessions, 9 National Council for Science sessions and 17 sessions of the Scientific Area Councils.

The most important topics discussed in 2012 at the National Council for Higher Education sessions, prepared jointly with the Agency, concerned the draft legislative changes in science and higher education, implementation of the strategic document *Network of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes*, academic promotions at universities as proposed by the Rectors' Conference, as well as those at polytechnics and colleges as proposed by the Council of Polytechnics and Colleges, criteria for accreditation of distance learning study programmes, etc.

Part of the Higher Education Council's work, and thus also the Agency's, was completing the external evaluation procedures started before the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education was enacted. On the basis of the procedures, the Council recommended the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports to issue a licence for three new study programmes (two professional and one graduate specialist).

The main topics discussed by the National Council for Science in 2012 were the draft law on scientific activity, scientific centres of excellence, draft Ordinance on the Conditions of Appointment to Scientific Grades and draft Network of Scientific Organisations.

In 2012 Scientific Area Councils held 17 sessions: 2 were held by the Scientific Area Council for Natural Sciences; 2 by the Scientific Area Council for Biomedicine and Health; 2 by the Scientific Area Council for Biotechnological Sciences; 4 by the Scientific Area Council for Social Sciences, 4 by the Scientific Area Council for Humanities and 1 by the Council for Arts.

The topics discussed included the draft law on scientific activity, Ordinance on the Scientific and Art Areas, Fields and Branches, criteria for appointment to scientific grades and journal categorisation. Scientific Area Councils suggested additional criteria for quality assurance and improvement in the system of science and higher education, as well as criteria of scientific excellence to be applied to scientific centres of excellence.

In addition to this, they discussed guidelines specific for each area, as well as topics of general interest for the scientific community. Also discussed were individual requests for appointment to scientific grades, requests for systematisation of scientific fields, requests to reorganise Scientific Field Committees, interpret the Ordinance on the Conditions of Appointment to Scientific Grades, the Ordinance on the Scientific and Art Areas, Fields and Branches, etc.

Scientific Field Committees

The Agency continued supporting the 23 Scientific Field Committees which participate into appointment to scientific and teaching grades.

In 2012, a total of 78 sessions were held, passing 1477 positive and 48 negative decisions on appointment to scientific grades, or artistic and teaching grades.

#### 18 Work of scientific field committees in 2012

Scientific Field Committee (SFC)	Number of sessions held in 2012	Number of positive decisions on appointment to scientific grades passed in 2012	Number of negative decisions on appointment to scientific grades passed in 2012	Problems and current affairs in implementing the Ordinance* and the Law**
Biology	4	50	2	
Physics	3	40		
Geology	3	26	1	
Chemistry	3	33	2	
Mathematics	3	34	-	
Architecture	2	24	-	
Electrical Engineering	3	65	4	
Chemical Engineering	4	36	3	
Mechanical Engineering	3	94	3	
Medicine	5	333	2	
Veterinary Medicine	3	52		
Biotechnological Sciences	4	123	-	
Economics	4	67	1	
Information Sciences	2	25	1	
Pedagogy	4	41	3	
Political Science	3	29	6	
Law	4	33	1	
Psychology	2	14	1	
Philosophy and Theology	4	31	-	
Philology	4	80	6	
History	3	100	2	
Interdisciplinary Field	4	40	9	
Art Field	4	107	1	
Total	78	1477	48	

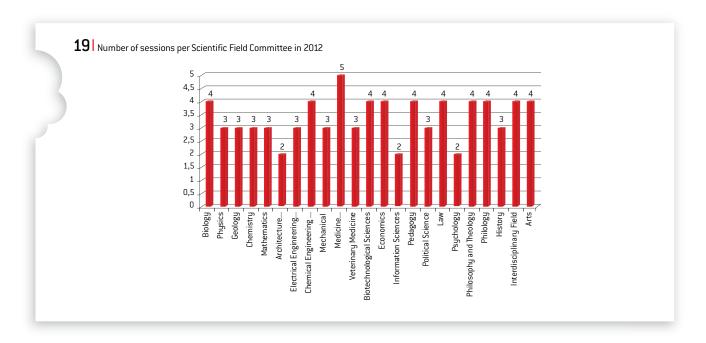
<sup>\*</sup> Ordinance on Criteria for Appointment to Scientific Positions, [0G 84/05, 100/06, 138/06, 120/07, 116/10]

\*\* Act on Scientific Activity and Higher Education, [0G 123/03, 105/04, 174/04, 2/07 Decision of the Constitutional Court, 46/7, 45/09]

The data indicate that the largest number of decisions on appointment to scientific grades was passed by the Scientific Field Committee for Biomedicine and Health - fields of Fundamental Medical Sciences, Clinical Medical Sciences, Public Health and Health Protection, Dentistry and Pharmacy, followed by the Scientific Field Committee for Biotechnological Sciences - fields of Agricultural Sciences, Forestry, Wood Technology, Biotechnology and Food Technology, and 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.

Total number of appointments to scientific grades upon individual request in 2012 was 853, while those implemented on the basis of a public call amounted to 481. This means that 63.94% appointments were done upon individual request, and only 36.06% on the basis of calls (leaving out the appointments done by the 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 and the Committee for the Interdisciplinary Field (science; arts).)

Out of these appointments, 681 were into the grade of Scientific Associate, 395 into the grade of Scientific Associate, and 258 into the grade of Scientific Advisor.



#### Scientific Field Committees for Natural Sciences

#### Scientific Field Committee for Natural Sciences - Biology

Four sessions were held in 2012:

- at the 9<sup>th</sup> session held on February 17<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and nineteen positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 🛸 at the 10<sup>th</sup> session held on June 5<sup>th</sup> 2012 one seven decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on September 25<sup>th</sup> 2012 six decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 12<sup>th</sup> session held on November 26<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and eighteen positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 50 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 2 negative decisions were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committee for Natural Sciences - Physics

Three sessions were held in 2012:

- ≰ at the 10<sup>th</sup> session held on March 9<sup>th</sup> 2012 fourteen decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2012 two negative and nine positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 12<sup>th</sup> session held on November 9<sup>th</sup> 2012 seventeen decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 40 decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committee for Natural Sciences - Geology

Three sessions were held in 2012:

- 💰 at the 9<sup>th</sup> session held on March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012 six decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 10<sup>th</sup> session held on July 17<sup>th</sup> 2012 seven decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on November 26<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and thirteen positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 26 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 2 negative decisions were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committee for Natural Sciences - Chemistry

Three sessions were held in 2012:

- at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on March 30<sup>th</sup> 2012 two negative and twelve positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- ≰ at the 12<sup>th</sup> session held on June 15<sup>th</sup> 2012 twelve decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- ≰ at the 13<sup>th</sup> session held on October 5<sup>th</sup> 2012 nine decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 33 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 2 negative decisions were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committee for Natural Sciences - Mathematics

Three sessions were held in 2012:

- ≰ at the 10<sup>th</sup> session held on March 15<sup>th</sup> 2012 seven decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 🕏 at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012 fourteen decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- ≰ at the 12<sup>th</sup> session held on November 6<sup>th</sup> 2012 thirteen decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 34 decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committees for Technological Sciences

## Scientific Field Committee for Technological Sciences - Architecture and Urbanism, Geodesy and Civil Engineering

Two sessions were held in 2012:

- 💰 at the 8<sup>th</sup> session held on May 18<sup>th</sup> 2012 twelve decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- ≰ at the 9<sup>th</sup> session held on October 30<sup>th</sup> 2012 twelve decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 24 decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committee for Technological Sciences - Electrical Engineering and Computing

Three sessions were held in 2012:

- at the 9<sup>th</sup> session held on March 29<sup>th</sup> 2012 two negative and nineteen positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 10<sup>th</sup> session held on July 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 two negative and twenty five positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- ≰ at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012 twenty one decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 65 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 4 negative decisions were passed.

## Scientific Field Committee for Technological Sciences - Chemical Engineering, Mining, Petroleum and Geological Engineering, Metallurgy, Textile Technology and Graphic Technology

Four sessions were held in 2012:

- at the 13<sup>th</sup> session held on January 17<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and seven positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 14<sup>th</sup> session held on March 27<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and eleven positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 15<sup>th</sup> session held on June 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and eight positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 🛸 at the 16<sup>th</sup> session held on October 9<sup>th</sup> 2012 ten decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 36 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 3 negative decisions were passed.

## Scientific Field Committee for Technological Sciences - Mechanical Engineering, Shipbuilding, Traffic and Transport Technology, Aviation, Rocket and Space Technology

Three sessions were held in 2012:

- s at the 12<sup>th</sup> session held on March 21<sup>st</sup> 2012 one negative and twenty four positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 13<sup>th</sup> session held on July 4<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and thirty four positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,

■ at the 14<sup>th</sup> session held on October 24<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and thirty three positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 91 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 3 negative decisions were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committees for Biomedicine and Healthcare

Scientific Field Committee for Biomedical Sciences and Healthcare - Fundamental Medical Sciences, Clinical Medical Sciences, Public Health and Health Protection, Dentistry and Pharmacy

Five sessions were held in 2012:

- ≰ at the 17<sup>th</sup> session held on February 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012 sixty nine decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 18<sup>th</sup> session held on May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012 one negative and seventy eight positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 🐞 at the 19<sup>th</sup> session held on July 10<sup>th</sup> 2012 forty five decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 20<sup>th</sup> session held on October 10<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and sixty nine positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 21<sup>st</sup> session held on December 5<sup>th</sup> 2012 seventy two decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 333 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 2 negative decisions were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committee for Biomedical Sciences and Healthcare - Veterinary Medicine

Three sessions were held in 2012:

- 💰 at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on February 28<sup>th</sup> 2012 nine decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- ≰ at the 12<sup>th</sup> session held on June 4<sup>th</sup> 2012 fifteen decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 13<sup>th</sup> session held on November 8<sup>th</sup> 2012 twenty eight decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 52 decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committees for Biotechnological Sciences

### Scientific Field Committee for Biotechnological Sciences - Agricultural Sciences, Forestry, Wood Technology, Biotechnology and Food Technology

Four sessions were held in 2012:

- ≰ at the 13<sup>th</sup> session held on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012 thirty one decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 14<sup>th</sup> session held on May 4<sup>th</sup> 2012 twenty four decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- ≰ at the 15<sup>th</sup> session held on July 13<sup>th</sup> 2012 forty one decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 16<sup>th</sup> session held on October 26<sup>th</sup> 2012 twenty seven decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 123 decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committees for Social Sciences

#### Scientific Field Committee for Social Sciences - Economics

Four sessions were held in 2012:

- 🕻 at the 13<sup>th</sup> session held on February 9<sup>th</sup> 2012 five decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 14<sup>th</sup> session held on May 17<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and twenty eight positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- ≰ at the 15<sup>th</sup> session held on July 18<sup>th</sup> 2012 nineteen decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 🕏 at the 16<sup>th</sup> session held on November 13<sup>th</sup> 2012 fifteen decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 67 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 2 negative decisions were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committee for Social Sciences - Information and Communication Sciences

Two sessions were held in 2012:

- ≰ at the 10<sup>th</sup> session held on April 17<sup>th</sup> 2012 twelve decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on September 26<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and thirteen positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 25 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 1 negative decision were passed.

### Scientific Field Committee for Social Sciences - Pedagogy, Educational and Rehabilitation Sciences, Logopedics and Kinesiology

Four sessions were held in 2012:

- at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on March 13<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and eleven positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 12<sup>th</sup> session held on May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012 twelve decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 13<sup>th</sup> session held on October 1<sup>st</sup> 2012 two negative and four positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- ≰ at the 14<sup>th</sup> session held on December 11<sup>th</sup> 2012 fourteen decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 41 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 3 negative decisions were passed.

### Scientific Field Committee for Social Sciences - Political Science, Sociology, Social Geography and Demography, Social Work and Security and Defence

Three sessions were held in 2012:

- at the 10<sup>th</sup> session held on April 4<sup>th</sup> 2012 two negative and eleven positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on July 5<sup>th</sup> 2012 two negative and ten positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 12<sup>th</sup> session held on November 6<sup>th</sup> 2012 two negative and eight positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 29 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 6 negative decisions were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committee for Social Sciences - Law

Four sessions were held in 2012:

💰 at the 10<sup>th</sup> session held on March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012 seven decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,

- at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on June 13<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and six positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 🛸 at the 12<sup>th</sup> session held on October 4<sup>th</sup> 2012 twelve decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 13<sup>th</sup> session held on December 13<sup>th</sup> 2012 eight decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 33 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 1 negative decision were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committee for Social Sciences - Psychology

Two sessions were held in 2012:

- at the 10<sup>th</sup> session held on May 14th 2012 one negative and five positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on September 19th 2012 nine decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 14 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 1 negative decision were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committees for Humanities

#### Scientific Field Committee for Humanities - Philosophy and Theology

Four sessions were held in 2012:

- ≰ at the 9<sup>th</sup> session held on February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012 nine decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 10<sup>th</sup> session held on May 21<sup>st</sup> 2012 seven decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2012 eight decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- ≰ at the 12<sup>th</sup> session held on December 20<sup>th</sup> 2012 seven decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 31 decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committee for Humanities - Philology

Four sessions were held in 2012:

at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on January 18<sup>th</sup> 2012 two negative and thirteen positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,

- 💰 at the 12<sup>th</sup> session held on April 25<sup>th</sup> 2012 twenty one decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 13<sup>th</sup> session held on October 17<sup>th</sup> 2012 four negative and thirty eight positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 14<sup>th</sup> session held on December 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 eight decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 80 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 6 negative decisions were passed.

### Scientific Field Committee for Humanities - History, Art History, Art Science, Archaeology, Ethnology and Anthropology

Three sessions were held in 2012:

- at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on February 29<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and thirty four positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- ≰ at the 12<sup>th</sup> session held on June 6<sup>th</sup> 2012 thirty six decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- **4** at the 13<sup>th</sup> session held on November 7<sup>th</sup> 2012 one negative and thirty positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed.

A total of 100 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 2 negative decisions were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committee for Arts

Scientific Field Committee for Arts - Dramatic Arts (theatre and media), Film Arts (film, electronic and media art of motion pictures), Music Art, Visual Art, Applied Arts, Dance Art, Movement Art

Four sessions were held in 2012:

- 💰 at the 9<sup>th</sup> session held on January 26<sup>th</sup> 2012 twenty two decisions on appointments to artistic-teaching grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 10<sup>th</sup> session held on April 26<sup>th</sup> 2012 twenty one decisions on appointments to artistic-teaching grades were passed,
- at the 11<sup>th</sup> session held on July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012 one negative and twenty two positive decisions on appointments to artistic-teaching grades were passed,
- 💰 at the 12<sup>th</sup> session held on November 15<sup>th</sup> 2012 forty two decisions on appointments to artistic-teaching grades were passed.

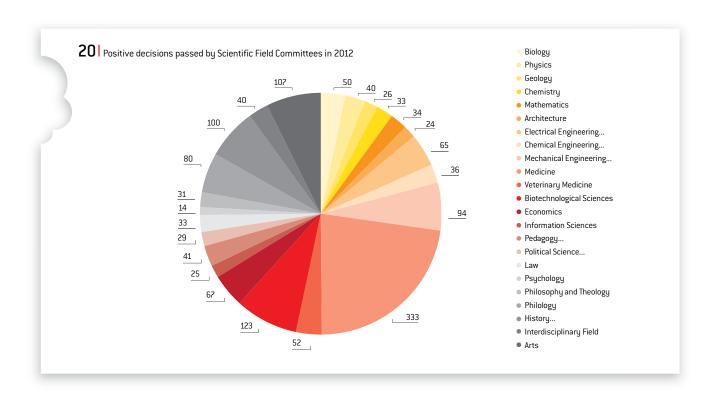
A total of 107 decisions on appointments to artistic-teaching grades and 1 negative decision were passed.

#### Scientific Field Committee for the Interdisciplinary Field

Four sessions were held in 2012:

- **4** at the 5th session held on February 16th 2012 one negative and five positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed, together with one decision on appointment to artistic-teaching grade,
- at the 6th session held on June 14th 2012 four negative and nine positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 7th session held on September 24th 2012 two negative and ten positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed,
- at the 8th session held on December 20th 2012 two negative and fourteen positive decisions on appointments to scientific grades were passed, together with one decision on appointment to artistic-teaching grade.

A total of 40 decisions on appointments to scientific grades and 9 negative decisions were passed.



## Council of Polytechnics and Colleges

In 2012 the Agency organised 4 regular sessions of the Council of Polytechnics and Colleges and 1 special session dedicated to discussing the Draft Proposal of the Law on Amendments to the Act on Scientific Activity and Higher Education.

In January 2012 a new Council president was appointed - prof.dr.sc. Slavica Ćosović Bajić, Dean of the Zagreb Polytechnic. The Council currently has 42 members - 15 polytechnics (12 public and 3 private) and 27 colleges (3 public and 24 private). Council members discussed the topics concerning the development of professional studies and decided on issues of common interest. The Agency participated in preparing the following documents published by the Council in 2012: Decision on the Conditions for Assessment of Teaching and Professional Activity in the Procedure of Appointment to Teaching Grades, Ordinance on Amendments to the Ordinance on the Organisation and Functioning of the Field Councils and Administering the Procedure of Election, and the Rules of Procedure of Amending the Council of Polytechnics and Colleges Rules of Procedure.

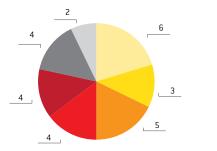
The Agency is a member of a committee tasked with preparing the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual conference of the *European Association of Higher Education Institutions* (EURASHE), which is to take place in 2013 in Split, and is one of the conference patrons, together with the Croatian president and the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports.

The Council of Polytechnics and Colleges has been an active member of EURASHE for years, and has cooperated with the Agency on the project *Harmonising Approaches to Professional Higher Education in Europe* which started in October 2012.

The Agency has also successfully cooperated with the Council of Students of Polytechnics and Colleges, established by the Council of Polytechnics and Colleges decision in September 2012.

The Council of Polytechnics and Colleges established 7 Field Committees, one per scientific field. Their successful functioning is ensured by the Agency, which coordinates the sessions, receives the documentation for appointment to teaching grades and is responsible for communication with institutions. The Field Committees pass opinions on compliance with minimal conditions for appointment to teaching grades, upon request of institutions. They held 28 sessions in the past year, passing 426 positive opinions, most of which by the Field Committee for Social Sciences.

21 Number of Council of Polytechnics and Colleges Field Committees' sessions in 2012



Biomedicine

Biotechnological Sciences

Social Sciences

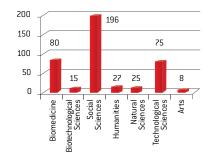
Humanities

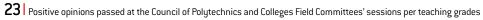
Natural Sciences

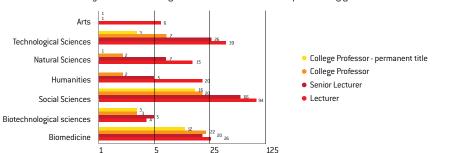
Technological Sciences

Arts





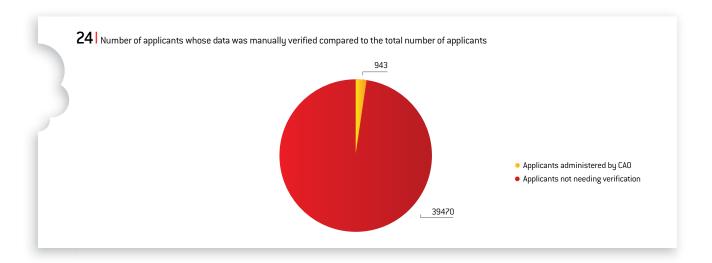


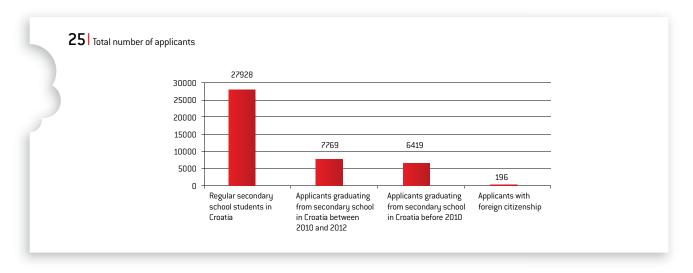




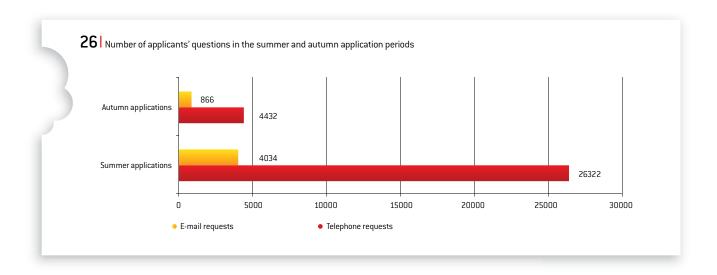
The Central Applications Office (CAO) of the Agency is the national information centre for applications to study programmes at Croatian higher education institutions. From the beginning of the year, it worked on collecting the documents by prospective applicants in 2012 who graduated from secondary schools abroad, or in Croatia before 2010.

There was a total of 943 such applicants, whose personal information and grades had to be verified in the National Information System for Applications to Higher Education Institutions (NISpVU), out of the total number of 40 413 applicants.



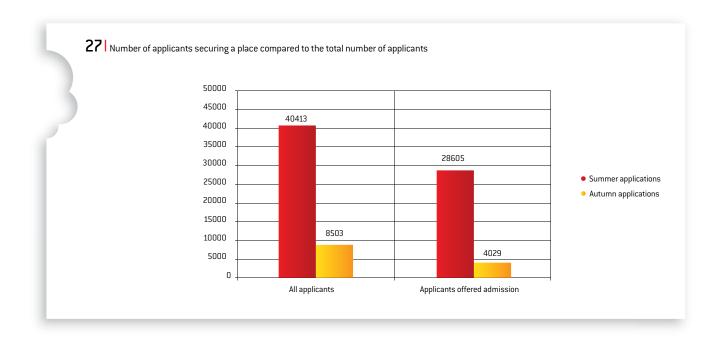


During both application periods CAO daily responded to applicants' questions, answering a total of 4 034 emails and 26 322 telephone calls in the summer application period. In the autumn application period, 866 emails and 4 432 telephone calls were replied.



In addition to this, CAO regularly communicated with institutional coordinators, checking details of the application procedures and reminding them of important deadliness and tasks in the application system. In March and April, CAO held meetings with coordinators and student service staff at institutions in Rijeka, Split, Osijek and Zagreb, presenting the key information and tasks in the application system. In November and December, CAO performed the necessary corrections in the application conditions for a number of study programmes to be applied to in the academic year 2013/14.

In the summer application period of the academic year 2012/13, a total of 187 493 applications were recorded in NISpVU, with a total of 36 394 student places available. Out of a total of 40 413 applicants, 28 605 managed to secure a place on a study programme. In the autumn period, there were 37 993 applications to a total of 795 places remaining, and out of 8503 applicants 4029 secured a place.



Starting from February 2013, CAO is taking over the system's User Support Service from CARNet, with the necessary preparations completed in 2012.

In October and November 2012 CAO cooperated with the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education and the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports on creating the brochure *Applications to State Matura Exams in 2012/13 and Applications to Study Programmes*, to help the applicants in applying to the desired programmes in 2013/14. The www.postani-student.hr website presented five brochures, adapted to each applicant category.

The Agency cooperated with the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education in developing the Rules on Application Conditions and Procedure, Administering Entrance Exams and Ranking Applicants to Study Programmes, adopted by the Croatian Rectors' Conference.

During 2012 CAO regularly met with the members of the Body for Improving the Applications to Higher Education Institutions Procedure, which issued recommendations for improvement.

In order to provide full and prompt information to applicants, CAO staff regularly updated the www.studij.hr website, available both in Croatian and English. With the same goal in mind, the news publishing application of the website was upgraded in 2012.

In addition to this, a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system was developed in order to collect user information. The system also includes an internal application for monitoring and statistics used by CAO to monitor the quality of the user support they provide.

CAO developed other software in-house to support the applicants, enabling them, among other things, to perform a multi-criteria comparison of study programmes, track the success of enrolled students at individual institutions, and go through the whole application and ranking process in a trial mode.

2012 also saw the development of the conceptual model of the system for applications to graduate study programmes, together with the launching of the system framework development. Central applications to graduate programmes will provide insight into the conditions at the national level, increasing mobility and thus bringing this aspect of the Croatian system closer to the Bologna guidelines.

In 2012 CAO also cooperated with the Zagreb Institute for Social Research, which implemented the first comprehensive analysis of applications to undergraduate study programmes in Croatia in the past two years, aimed at providing a quality assessment of the application system.

Finally, CAO staff participated in the work of the National Forum for Lifelong Career Guidance.

# Recognition of foreign higher education qualifications

The National ENIC/NARIC Office of the Agency serves as an information centre on academic mobility and recognition of foreign higher education qualifications. In 2012 it implemented a number of activities aimed at supporting the strategic goals of encouraging international mobility in Europe and beyond and participated in developing quality assurance platforms for all levels of education. The Office activities, primarily the procedures of recognition of foreign higher education qualifications, are based on European policy guidelines and criteria which help the Office contribute to encouraging mobility.

In 2012 the Office worked on increasing transparency of the recognition procedure, diversifying information which helps citizens who want to have their foreign qualifications recognised in Croatia or their Croatian qualifications recognised abroad.

Supporting the lifelong learning policy, the Office provides various levels and forms of training and professional education to the bodies tasked with recognising qualifications, professionals working on evaluating qualifications or recognising foreign ones, and staff working in human resources.

With the same aim, the Office regularly passes opinions and explanations providing all the information on the status of a qualification in the country of origin, and the comparability of an educational level to the levels of education in Croatia. In this way, the Office contributes to the final decision on employing a person or enrolling him or her to a study programme in Croatia, which is in line with the European best practice on recognition of foreign higher education qualifications.

The Office also continued to develop its role as the contact point, given to the Office by the Act on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications. In line with the Directive 2005/36/EC, the contact point provides citizens and contact points from other countries with the information necessary to recognise qualifications regulated by the Directive, such as information on national legislation regarding these professions, social legislation and, where necessary, ethical rules. In addition to this, the contact point helps citizens in attaining the rights regulated by the Directive, where appropriate, in cooperation with other contact persons and the competent bodies of host countries. The contact point is also tasked with administering the National Database of Information on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications.

The Office participates in the activities of the Working Group for Improvement of the Legislative Framework for Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications, working on amending the Act on Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications and the Act on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications. It also works with the Committee for Inter-sectoral Coordination for Regulated Professions, which is tasked with devising a plan to align Croatian legislation in this field with the *acquis communautaire*. This includes organising trainings for the connected administrative structure. Finally, the Office works with the Working Group for Removing Obstacles to International Mobility in Education for the Period 2010 - 2012.

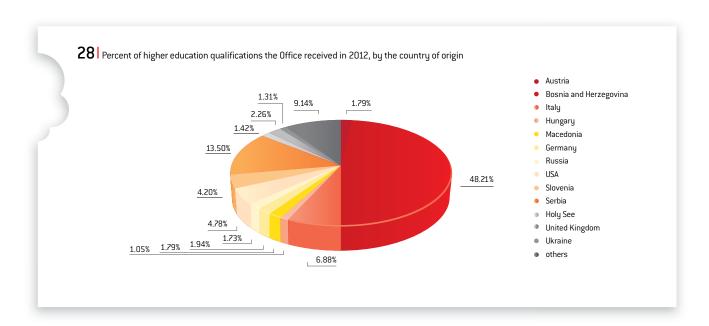
In working with these bodies, the Office provides systematic reviews of international qualification recognition, the connected processes, best practice examples and guidelines for work in the Croatian context. This is based on years of experience with working with the ENIC/NARIC network and the Lisbon Recognition Commission.

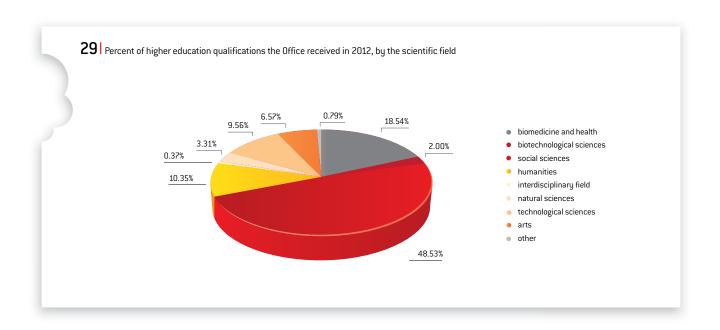
The National ENIC/NARIC Office performs the full procedure of recognising foreign higher education qualifications and, upon request by higher education institutions' Offices for Academic Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications, participates in academic recognition by issuing recommendations for recognition of qualifications and periods of study abroad.

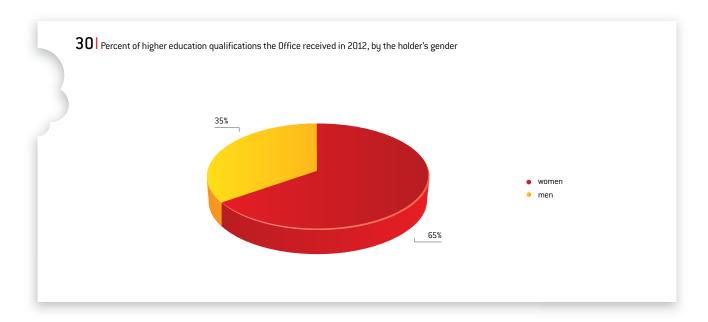
In addition to providing expertise in administrative procedures, the Office replies on daily basis to the questions of foreign and Croatian legal and physical persons interested in national and foreign educational systems and national and foreign higher education programmes and qualifications.

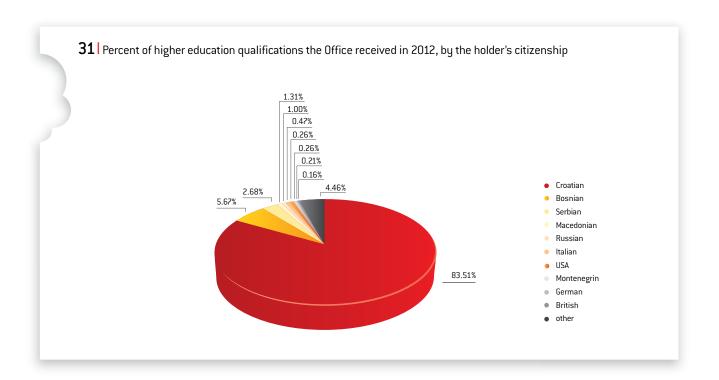
#### In 2012 the National ENIC/NARIC Office:

- fully recognised 1887 higher education qualifications (99,11% of those received),
- issued 130 explanations of higher education qualifications,
- replied to more than 1000 e-mail inquiries 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.









# International activities 106

In 2012 the Agency participated in various strategic activities of international networks and associations it is a member of, further strengthening its role as a competent and equal participant in discussing the development of higher education and science in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and European Research and Innovation Area (ERIA) and beyond, working also with the US Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN).

The Agency became an APQN observer member at the beginning of the year, and in September it joined the CHEA International Quality Group. In addition to this, the Agency became a full member the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA).

Within the APQN Exchange Programme 2012 a *Taiwan Assessment and Evaluation Association* (TAEA) representative, Mr. Devin Wu, visited the Agency from December 3<sup>rd</sup> to December 7<sup>th</sup>. As an observer, he participated in the external audit procedure carried out by the Agency at the University of Zagreb. During the visit, he met with prof. dr. sc. Blaženka Divjak, University vice-rector for students and study programmes, and mr. sc. Mislav Balković, dean of the Algebra University College for Applied Computer Engineering. Mr. Wu also met Agency staff, presenting the work of his agency as well as the APQN.

Becoming a member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) in 2011, and being listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) in the same year, the Agency was able to participate in a number of ENQA projects. In its work, the Agency was recognised as an important stakeholder in creating European higher education policies, developing strategic documents and charting future directions of cooperation among agencies by developing common platforms for external quality assurance procedures in higher education in Europe. Among other projects, in 2012 the Agency participated in consultations regarding amendments to Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) based on the outcomes of the Mapping ESG project launched in 2010 by the E4 group: ENQA, ESU (European Students' Union), EUA (European University Association) and EURASHE (European Association of Institutions in Higher Education). The aim of the project was to collect information on the way ESG are implemented in the Bologna Declaration signatory countries, particularly their higher education institutions and external quality assurance agencies. The resulting publication with project recommendations for amending ESG was presented at the Bucharest Ministerial Conference held in April 2012.

Successful cooperation with ENQA already in our first year of full membership was confirmed at the end of the year with the visit of ENQA Managing Board president, dr. Achim Hopbach who also serves as the director of the *Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria* (AQA).

Dr. Hopbach visited the Agency in order to exchange information on the current topics in quality assurance in higher education and science in the European context but also at the national level. He particularly emphasised the importance of cooperating with the Agency as the first of the regional agencies to be received to ENQA and listed in EQAR.

Also, dr. Hopbach commended the organisational structure of the Agency, which has the National ENIC/NARIC Office as its integral part, stressing the importance of connecting recognition of higher education qualifications and quality assurance in higher education as integral segments of the Bologna "knowledge triangle" - connecting education, research and business.



Dr. Achim Hopbach visiting the Agency in 2012

Finally, dr. Hopbach expressed his support to the Agency's autonomy, which is enabled by the current Croatian higher education and science system, allowing it to work professionally and independently, without political or other influences. Another topic discussed at the meeting were the difficulties encountered by agencies in accrediting joint study programmes, the issue in which dr. Hopbach believes political and legal support are crucial to approaching the obstacles more flexibly, these usually being connected to differences in national legislations. Other topics were standards and criteria for accrediting online study programmes, e.g. programmes for distance learning, common European database of experts available to all ENQA members, quality assurance for doctoral courses, future challenges and future ENQA priorities.

At the end of 2012, the US University of Georgia Institute of Higher Education launched the Higher Education Initiative for Southeastern Europe (HEISEE). This developmental project is carried out jointly by the Zagreb Institute for Social Research, Institute for Development of Education, a Zagreb NGO, the Agency and the United States of America Embassy in Zagreb. The long-term goal of the Initiative is to spread the model to the whole region through carefully devised cooperation with institutes, agencies and organisations in other Southeastern Europe countries. The Initiative aims to build capacities of regional academic communities by creating networks of local and international academics.

As the Agency is strategically oriented towards not only European, but also regional networking, in 2012 it continued to serve on the Managing Board of the regional Network of Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA) and continued its cooperation with ERI SEE (Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe) and RCC (Regional Cooperation Council) on the topics of quality assurance, qualifications frameworks and evidence-based policy making.

The Agency also continued its cooperation with the European Training Foundation (ETF), particularly the Torinet - Governance for Evidence, aimed at increasing effectiveness of educational policies, which included organising a number of activities in cooperation with the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports. A number of round tables were held aimed at deepening the discussion on the topic of connecting education with labour market needs, creating a network of experts working on data collection and analyses, and recognising advantages and disadvantages of the current state of evidence-based policy making in the field of education and training. The conferences' and round tables' conclusions served as a basis for study visit to Sweden, prepared at a workshop on expected results. The study visit of the members of the Evidence Based Policy Making (EBPM) Focus Group, which includes Agency staff, to Sweden, took place in May 2012.

Because the Agency is dedicated to global trends following and good practice exchange, it also continued its work within the global network INQAAHE (International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education). The Australian Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) hosted the INQAAHE Members' Forum 2012 held on April 17th and 18th 2012 in Melbourne. The publication on the topic Developments in the Methodology of External Quality Assurance at the INQAAHE website included our paper titled Quality Audits in Croatia.

In addition to this, in 2012 Agency representatives participated and gave speeches and presentations on a number of international conferences and seminars, such as the 7<sup>th</sup> European Quality Assurance Forum titled How does QA make a difference?, the 34<sup>th</sup> annual forum of the European Higher Education Society - EAIR, annual forum of the Association for Institutional Research - AIR, ENQA annual conference and members' workshop, 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Higher Education Institutional Research - HEIR conference: Unlocking Institutional Research: information and knowledge for enhanced institutional effectiveness, EURASHE annual conference Responding to challenges for European higher education: Lifelong learning and the Welfare Society, ASEM - Asian and European stakeholders in quality assurance seminar on Quality Assurance in Higher Education, International Private Education Week in Moscow with the topic Private Higher Education in the Republic of Croatia and the International Students' Congress in Rijeka with the topic Academic mobility five years after introducing Bologna.

## European Union projects and other projects

#### **EUROPEAN UNION LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME (LLP)**

#### **EQArep**

Transparency of European higher education through public quality assurance reports - EQArep is a 24-month long project which started in September 24, coordinated by ENQA. The project will map the current publication practices, explore the different needs of stakeholders for transparent and comparable information, develop standards for different types of quality assurance reports in the European Higher Education Area and evaluate whether a European template for quality assurance reports is feasible.

The project will result in a recommendation to quality assurance agencies on the content and form of informative and approachable quality assurance reports. Thus the envisaged impact is a higher degree of comparability of quality assurance reports and consequently a better contribution of quality assurance to transparency of higher education at the European level. Together with the Agency, project partners are quality assurance agencies from Estonia, Ireland and Switzerland.

#### CeQuInt

Certificate for the Quality of Internationalisation - CeQuInt is an 18-month long project which started in September 2012. Coordinated by ECA, the project aims to develop a methodology for evaluating internationalisation of higher education, by developing a quality stamp for institutions which managed to develop international exchange and cooperation which benefits their students, staff and local community. The project involves 12 European quality assurance agencies, coming from Austria, Germany, Slovenia, France, Poland, Spain and Finland, as well as organisations specialising in internationalisation of higher education - ACA (Academic Cooperation Association) and DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service).

#### QFs-UHSE

The Use or Potential Use of Qualifications Frameworks as a Tool of Mobility by HEIs and Other Stakeholders is a project of the Agency's ENIC/NARIC Office, coordinated by the French agency Centre international d'études pédagogiques - CIEP. In 24 months, from February 2012 to February 2014, the project aims to look at ways in which transparency tools built in the European higher education reforms, such as diploma supplements and qualification frameworks, facilitated qualification recognition, and develop methods for training and informing higher education institutions, employers and hiring agencies to further support labour mobility within Europe.

#### **ENIC CAPACITY BUILDING**

As obvious from the title, the project aims at building ENIC capacities in former Yugoslav countries, based on the similarities among the higher education systems and labour markets of these countries. Lead by the British NARIC Office, the project looks into the best practices of the countries, with an emphasis on the Croatian system of recognition of foreign higher education qualifications, developing common recognition methods for third country qualifications, improving the system for detecting false diplomas and developing internal archival and information systems. The Agency is one of the project coordinators.

#### Other programmes

#### **UNESCO GIQAC**

The project, which lasted for 18 months, until June 2012, and was coordinated by ENQA, aimed at looking into the application of Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) in the Balkan area, and organising experience exchange among the Balkan agencies. As the only Balkan agency passing through an external evaluation according to the ESG, the Agency presented its work to all partner agencies, organised a workshop in Zagreb and received staff from other agencies as observers during the re-accreditation study visits in 2012. The project results will also be used in the ongoing procedure of amending ESG.

### From Brain Gain Policies to Practices - Dissemination of Best Institutional Practise in the Western Balkan region

The Agency offered its key experts and experience in recognition of foreign higher education qualifications to the project organised by Group 484 and funded by the Balkans Peace Fund, aimed at applying regional good practices to the Serbian system of recognition of foreign qualifications. The project started in December 2011 and lasted until the end of 2012. For the project, the Agency developed a Case Study on Foreign Higher Education Qualifications Recognition.

In addition to this, five of our project proposals have been shortlisted for funding, and are being evaluated by the European Commission: two projects for IPA funding and three for the LLP programme, with the Agency as a grantholder or partner. Project proposals were developed in cooperation with other European quality assurance agencies, Croatian higher education institutions, other ENIC and NARIC centres and European quality assurance networks ENQA and ECA, and are dedicated to further development and implementation of national qualifications frameworks, fostering the European dimension of quality assurance in higher education, and common understanding of the ESG.

# Training in 2012 | 07

The Agency puts special emphasis on training, and in 2012 we worked on further development of this aspect of our activities.

The re-accreditation procedures in the academic year 2011/12 involved thirty-five foreign experts employed at renowned European higher education institutions. In March, April and May the Agency organised trainings for expert panels' members, aimed at introducing them to the Croatian higher education system, as well as the details of the re-accreditation procedure.

Also, because the preparations for the re-accreditation in higher education in 2012/13 took place in 2012, in October 2012 the Agency organised a workshop for the institutions which will be undergoing the procedure, aimed at preparing the self-evaluation reports.

At the workshop, Agency staff informed the participants on the aims and the role of re-accreditation in the higher education system, the procedure details and criteria and the guidelines for drafting the self-evaluation. In order to exchange experiences and good practices, the workshop also included lectures by deans of two higher education institutions which already went through re-accreditation. In a survey following the workshop, participants assessed it with a high grade - 4,31.



Annual workshop for certified auditors held in December 2012

Regarding the external audit of internal quality assurance systems at higher education institutions, implemented by the Agency, it has to be stressed that the reliability of procedure is based on the work of expert panels composed of Croatian and foreign professors, students and businesspeople.

In 2012 we organised basic training for inclusion to the Certified Auditors' Database, successfully completed by 17 participants. Continuing our practice of sustained cooperation with auditors, in December 2012 we also organised the annual workshop aimed at introducing certified auditors with national and international trends and good practices in quality assurance.

# Internal quality assurance | 08

In 2012 the Agency went through second re-certification of its Quality Management System (QMS) and self-assessment of the systems' effectiveness and efficiency. A questionnaire was developed, in line with the ISO 9001 norm points, to show the achievements and assess the activities carried out in developing the QMS, as well as point to recommendations for improvement in the next six-year period.

The report on the QMS self-assessment contained data collected during the past six years: results of internal and external audits, analyses of the customer satisfaction surveys, charts depicting results of both staff and customer surveys and the Agency's growth and changes to the staff structure.

A separate part of the report was an analysis of the completed external quality assurance procedures in science and higher education, with a meta-evaluation of the external audits, syntheses of the results of the thematic evaluation of public research institutes and re-accreditation of higher education institutions working in the field of economics, as well as the analysis of the surveys done among the procedures' participants. This detailed analysis of relevant data showed that QMS was effective and efficient.

In the times of crisis, it has become a global trend to introduce risk management systems as a necessary stabilisation measure, especially when considering public institutions (ministries, agencies, chambers, etc.) *The Institute of Risk Management* (IRM) worked with ALARM - the *National Forum for Risk Management in the Public Sector and the Association of Insurance and Risk Management* (AIRMIC) on developing a document titled *A Risk Management Standard*, published in 2002 and specifically aimed at public institutions, which is used ever more often in identifying and tackling the adverse consequences of the risks encountered in achieving strategic goals of an institution. Risk management process was incorporated into our QMS, to be implemented in the following years.

The external audit (recertification) was carried out by the Det Norske Veritas (DNV) company, which concurred on the QMS efficiency and effectiveness, as shown by the grade given (5 - commendations) and issuing a new certificate, valid until October 28<sup>th</sup> 2015.

The Quality Assurance System (QAS) was established in 2010, when the Manual was developed - it is based on the QMS documents, Agency Strategy, Activity Plan for the current year, analysis of the activities aimed at achieving short-term goals, and internal and external audit results.

# 2012 Financial Report 109

The Agency is funded by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports. The Agency revenue in 2012 was comprised of 10 accounts:

- A621153 National Council for Higher Education,
- A621155 administration and general transactions,
- A621179 National Council for Science,
- A621182 Council of Polytechnics and Colleges,
- ▲ A621186 evaluation of scientific institutions,
- ▲ A621187 evaluation of higher education institutions,
- ≰ K621178 equipment,
- 💰 A621190 external audit of higher education institutions and scientific organisations
- A621191 Central Applications Office,
- 💰 A621192 Interdepartmental Body for Labour Market Monitoring

Based on the financial reports, total revenue in 2012 amounted to 22.268.957,00 kn. It consisted of:

- state budget resources for 2012 21.065.599,00 kn,
- service revenue 798.890,00 kn,
- other revenue 88.224,00 kn,
- EU LLP funds for the International ENIC and NARIC Network 2013 Annual Conference 316.244,00 kn.

The Agency expenditure in 2012 amounted to 22.314.188,00 kn, consisting of business expenditure - 21.909.625,00 kn and expenditure for acquisition of non-financial assets - 404.563,00 kn. The expenditure funded from the state budget amounted to 21.065.599,00 kn.

#### **32** Agency for Science and Higher Education 2012 Expenditure

	Expenses	kn
A	Business expenditure	21.909.625,00
1	Staff expenditure	8.179.471,00
1.1	Salaries (gross)	6.917.054,00
1.2	Salary contributions	1.094.956,00
1.3	Other staff costs	167.461,00
2	Material costs	13.695.476,00
2.1	Service costs	10.037.652,00
2.2	Travel costs and other remunerations	2.610.844,00
2.3	Material and energy expenditure	349.389,00
2.4	Other costs	697.591,00
3	Financial expenditure	34.678,00
В	Acquisition of non-financial assets	404.563,00
	Total (A+B)	22.314.188,00

Other staff costs (1.3 in Chart 32) included bonuses, reimbursements, gifts for children and other benefits.

Service costs (2.1 in Chart 32) included:

- contracts for maintenance and upgrading of the NISpVU system (National Information System for Applications to Study Programmes in Croatia), maintenance and upgrading of the information system supporting the Agency's external quality assurance activities MOZVAG, information equipment maintenance costs and archiving
- maintenance of other information systems Centrix system for administration and data management, IP telephone centre and contact centre, software for financial administration, etc.
- ҝ rent,
- 🚺 telephone, post and transport costs,
- intellectual and personal services (gross):
  - temporary work contracts with members of expert panels (from Croatia and abroad) working in the external quality assurance procedures implemented by the Agency (re-accreditation, initial accreditation, thematic evaluations and audits)

- temporary work contracts with members of professional and administrative bodies working with the Agency (Agency Management Board, Accreditation Council, National Council for Science, National Council for Higher Education, Scientific Field Committees, Scientific Area Councils)
- student work for Central Applications Office and Scientific Field Committees (organising and relocating archival documentation), translation, editing etc.,
- promotion and information services,
- communal services,
- design and printing costs, and other services.

Travel costs and other remunerations (2.2 in Chart 32) included:

- travel costs and remunerations for members of the expert panels and professional bodies and Agency employees, as well as remunerations for transport costs of employees,
- training costs.

Material and energy expenditure (2.3 in Chart 32) included acquisition of professional journals and books, office supplies, supplies for cleaning and maintenance of the Agency offices and cars, energy costs etc.

Other costs (2.4 in Chart 32) included membership fees, insurance, and other fees.

Acquisition of non-financial assets (B in Chart 32) included software licences, acquisition of new software, acquisition of computers and computer equipment, equipment for protection and maintenance, and furniture.

# 2013 Activity Plan | 10

On the basis of the current needs of the Croatian system of science and higher education, as well as the 2013 Agency Operational Plan, for the next period the Agency sets the following goals:

- issue accreditation recommendations for higher education institutions delivering study programmes in the technological fields that went through the re-accreditation procedure in 2012
- carry out the re-accreditation of nine institutions in the biotechnological field and fourteen private institutions
- prepare the re-accreditation procedures for the academic year 2013/14
- carry out re-accreditation of twenty five public research institutes
- carry out a thematic evaluation aimed at checking compliance of new study programmes at public universities with the minimal conditions for delivering study programmes
- carry out the thematic evaluation of study programmes in biomedicine and healthcare
- carry out the thematic evaluation of doctoral study programmes
- carry out audits of six higher education institutions and complete the procedure for the nine institutions included in the 2012 plan and two from the 2011 plan
- process requests for initial accreditation of new study programmes and scientific activity
- organise the annual ENIC and NARIC centres conference in Split, in June 2013
- organise the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual conference of the European Association of Higher Education Institutions EURASHE in Split in May 2013
- organise the international seminar Excellence in education: a motor for research and innovation, in cooperation with the Embassy of Israel in Croatia, in Zagreb in April 2013
- work on two international projects Use or potential use of qualifications frameworks as a tool of mobility by HEIs and other stakeholders and ENIC Capacity Building
- carry out the IPA project Competitive Croatian Higher Education for Better Employment

- collect information on employability and study satisfaction among alumni
- develop a framework for the centralised application system for graduate programmes in Croatia
- train exam coordinators in secondary schools on the process of applying to higher education institutions
- launch professional guidance services for applicants to higher education programmes
- monitor and implement the tendering procedure and manage the IPA project of developing the National Information System for Higher Education and Science
- upgrade the MOZVAG system (for data collection and evaluation procedures)
- continue professional and administrative support to the work of strategic and professional bodies in the system of science and higher education (National Council for Science, National Council for Higher Education, Council of Polytechnics and Colleges, Scientific Field Committees, Scientific Area Councils and the Arts Council, Council for Funding Scientific Activity and Higher Education)
- continue training activities training for expert panels in the external quality assurance procedures, workshops on selfevaluation for institutions undergoing the re-accreditation procedure
- continue informing applicants on the procedure of applying to higher education institutions in Croatia
- continue providing information on the national educational system, foreign education systems and recognition of foreign higher education qualifications
- amend the Act on Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications and the Act on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications
- maintain and improve the internal quality management and assurance systems (QMS and QAS)
- preserve the public trust.

# 11 Contacts

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#### National ENIC/NARIC Office -

#### Recognition of foreign higher education qualifications

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#### Scientific Field Committees Office

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#### Department of Science

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