

# ENQA working Group on Stakeholder involvement in QA practices: A preliminary account of the work accomplished

Rafael Llavori, ANECA  
ENQA Board Member

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# AGENDA



- Stakeholder involvement in the EHEA: the actors, E4 + 2
  - Higher education Institutions: EUA and EURASHE
  - Students: ESU
  - Quality Assurance Agencies: ENQA
  - New partners “at stake”: employers and academic staff
- Stakeholder involvement in the EHEA: the rationale after the Bucharest Communiqué
- The ENQA working group on stakeholders involvement
- Conclusions

## Stakeholders Involvement: challenges

- *Stakeholders* are part of the HE process and have to participate in HE in a regular and regulated way
- Their role depends on the national context:
  - Legal framework,
  - Academic tradition,
  - HE dynamics (public/private balance, role played by the government, professional bodies...)
- Need to structure the relationships among all of them
- QAAs as “cataliser”: roles clearly defined (respecting the division of labour)
- Concept of stakeholders co-responsibility in the outcome of QA off HE

## Stakeholders Involvement: challenges

Stakeholders participation in QA practices in the QAAs has a big impact in the binomial:

**Transparency + accountability (of the QAA)**

Stakeholders participation in the QA policy results in :

**Co-responsibility and legitimacy of the process (and outcomes) of the QAA and the HE system**

# The rationale after the Bucharest Communiqué

- Next generation of stakeholders involvement in QA practices in the EHEA .
- Need to rethink and redefine the concept and the scope of stakeholder in QA of HE.
- Bucharest Communiqué:

*We commit to both maintaining the public responsibility for QA and to actively **involve a wide range of stakeholders in this development.** We acknowledge the **ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE** (the E4 group) report on the implementation and application of the “European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance” (ESG). (...) The revision will be based upon an initial proposal to be prepared by the E4 in cooperation with **Education International, BUSINESSEUROPE** and the European Quality Assurance Register for HE (EQAR) (...)*



# Stakeholders: E4 + 2 +1



# Stakeholder Involvement on QA practices

## Students: a second stage?

- Students representatives a successful model:
  - Active participation in EQA processes
  - Good practices identified throughout Europe
  - Creation of pools of students for QA processes
  - Is that enough? Is there room for improvement?
- One size fits all possible QA practices?
  - Specific profiles for specialised processes?  
(postgraduate, doctoral, research-oriented evaluations)

# Stakeholder Involvement on QA practices

## Students: a second stage?

- Is there life (involvement) beyond graduation?
  - Alumni: a possible *character* to complement the model
  - An intermediate category between student and academic staff and professional practitioner
  - Appropriate for particular contexts: research, doctoral, institutional?
  - Is there any good practices?



# Stakeholder Involvement on QA practices after Bucharest: some ideas

## Academic staff: more than peers.

- Is there a policy for involving the academic staff in QA processes internal and externally?
  - Expanding the quality assurance culture
  - How can we go beyond the *true believers*?
- Good practices of mobilising academic staff beyond peer reviews and evaluation committees. Case studies at the agency/national level.
- Education International:
  - Possible ways to involve academic staff representatives in QA

# Stakeholder Involvement on QA practices after Bucharest: some ideas

## Employers / professional bodies

- Identification of good practices at the agency/national level
  - Members of the evaluation panels
  - Other involvements
- Employers as actors in the HE sector: public and/or private
  - Taking part at the programme design level: employability
  - Part of the QF consultant groups
- Professional bodies as stakeholders vs QA practitioners
  - Specialised agencies
- **As a reaction to these challenges, ENQA included in his Action Plan in 2012 to set up a WG on Stakeholder Involvement**

# ENQA working Group on Stakeholder involvement in QA practices (May 2012)

Name	Organisation	Country	Emails
Rafael Llavori, Chair	ANECA	Spain	<a href="mailto:rlavori@aneca.es">rlavori@aneca.es</a>
Stephanie Herring	OAQ	Switzerland	<a href="mailto:laura.beccari@oaq.ch">laura.beccari@oaq.ch</a>
Stephanie Bernhardt	ACQUIN	Germany	<a href="mailto:bernhardi@acquin.org">bernhardi@acquin.org</a>
Ferdije Etemi	KAA	Kosovo	<a href="mailto:ferdijehushi2010@gmail.com">ferdijehushi2010@gmail.com</a>
Richard Jarman	QAA	UK	<a href="mailto:r.jarman@qaa.ac.uk">r.jarman@qaa.ac.uk</a>
Nathalie Lugano	ENQA	Belgium	<a href="mailto:Nathalie.lugano@enqa.eu">Nathalie.lugano@enqa.eu</a>
Almantas Serpatauskas	SKVC	Lithuania	<a href="mailto:almantas.serpatauskas@skvc.lt">almantas.serpatauskas@skvc.lt</a>
Erika Soboleva	AKKORK	Russia	<a href="mailto:erika.soboleva@gmail.com">erika.soboleva@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:akkork@akkork.ru">akkork@akkork.ru</a>
Maiki Udam	EKKA	Estonia	<a href="mailto:maiki.udam@archimedes.ee">maiki.udam@archimedes.ee</a>
Luis C. Velón Sixto	ACSUG	Spain	<a href="mailto:luis.velon@acsug.es">luis.velon@acsug.es</a>
Maria E. Weber	AQA	Austria	<a href="mailto:Maria.Weber@fhr.ac.at">Maria.Weber@fhr.ac.at</a>
Paul Zevenbergen	NVAO	The Netherlands	<a href="mailto:p.zevenbergen@nva.nl">p.zevenbergen@nva.nl</a>

## Expected outputs of the ENQA WG

- **Identifying good practices to reinforce stakeholders involvement at the agency/national level**
- **Stocktaking of good practices: a first draft**
- **Address stakeholders at the national level to discuss the first array of conclusions of the good practices' mapping**
- **Redefining new roles to be played by the stakeholders in QA practices**
- **To prepare an ENQA report *on Stakeholders involvement in QA practices* according to the new context derived from the Bucharest Communiqué**
- **(...)**

# The questionnaire

## **PART I. FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS ONLY**

### **Question 1:**

**1.1 HAVE YOU OR YOUR INSTITUTION BEEN INVOLVED IN QUALITY ASSURANCE (of Higher Education) EITHER NOW OR IN THE PAST?**

**1.2 IF YES, HAVE YOU / YOUR ORGANISATION BEEN INVOLVED IN:**

**External QA / Internal QA / Both**

**.3 IF NO, DO YOU THINK THAT YOU SHOULD BE INVOLVED?**

**Yes. If yes, in what sense or to what extent? / No. If no, why not?**

## **PART II. QUESTIONS FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS**

**1.1 ARE YOU / YOUR ORGANISATION INVOLVED IN HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE AS...?**

**Please circle those which apply:**

- **Academic/ Member of Staff in Higher Education Institution**
- **Student at Higher Education Institution**
- **Employers**
- (...)



# The questionnaire

## **1.2 PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT OF YOUR INVOLVEMENT.**

**CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE BENEFITS YOU/ YOUR ORGANISATION'S INVOLVEMENT HAS HAD ON IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION, GIVING EXAMPLES WHERE APPROPRIATE?**

**3.1 WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE MORE INVOLVED IN QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION? Yes / No**

**3.2. If yes, please explain why. Please also explain how the nature and extent on your involvement in quality assurance can be improved, giving examples where appropriate**

**3.3 If no, can you explain why not?**

**OTHER SUGGESTIONS/ COMMENTS**

# The questionnaire: methodology and results

- Objectives: To examine the scope and nature of stakeholder participation in QA
- To identify the various stakeholders in each country and QAA
- To make recommendations to the Board of ENQA and QAAs members for improvement
- Significance of making a contextualised approach in each country
- Tool: a qualitative brief questionnaire with 7 questions for stakeholders and 4 for HEIs
- Results: uneven response in number of stakeholders and depending on the country. In some cases “very expressive silences”
- Possibility to draw conclusions for ENQA members

# The questionnaire: methodology and results (2)

## Patterns by stakeholders

### HEIs

- Very engaged with QAAs and within their structures (executive and advisory boards, etc.)
- Widely involved in QA process (accreditation, audits, both internal as external)

### Academic staff

- Involved but on an individual level (expert in panels) both in internal and external QA procedures
- There is a lack of involvement beyond the group of “true believers”

# The questionnaire: methodology and results (3)

## Students

- Joined as “experts” in both internal and external
- Members of the board and advisory bodies (ANECA, NVAO)
- Partners in the development of evaluation procedures (EKKA)
- Developing pools of experts and providing with training (Scotland, Germany...)
- Definition of a strategy for the involvement of students: training, workshops, social media, etc. (QAA-UK)

# The questionnaire: methodology and results (4)

## Labour market

- Low participation in most of the QAAs: need to increase it and give a context
- Need to distinguish between activities for employers associations and professional associations
- Collaborate with discipline/professional accreditors (Quality Labels in Europe)

# The questionnaire: methodology and results (5)

## Broader audience

- Need to broaden the definition of stakeholder beyond those identify in the EHEA
- Need to adapt the messages sent by the QAAs to different audiences (social media)
- Need to make a contextual analysis in each country.

## Report on involvement of the labour market in the quality assurance in higher education

- Employers organisations are an exception regarding the involvement in HE
- Their implication is insufficient and should be promoted and strengthened
- What changes do we expect if we reinforce the participation of the representatives of the labour market?
- WG4 made a special analysis derived from the information provided by the questionnaire: coordinated by NVAO

## Report on involvement of the labour market in the quality assurance in higher education

- Make an approach to the current situation and to define a future scenario, as well as an agenda for that scenario
- Comparison of the various ways of employers involvement in the different countries
- The report gives the possibility to make a follow-up in the future in order to measure the achieved objectives (impact).

# Report on involvement of the labour market in the quality assurance in higher education

## Identified patterns

- QAAs agree on the urgency to involve the labour market representatives in the training of HE
- In most of the cases employers are only used as experts in the panels or in the councils
- There is a lack of definition in the formal relationships between QAAs, employers and professional employers.
- Need to analyse good practices within the context: a lot of room for improvement

# Report on involvement of the labour market in the quality assurance in higher education

## Some good practices identified by WG4:

- NVAO: individual interviews with advisors from the Dutch employers organisations: direct feedback
- QAA-UK: involved stakeholders in the revision of benchmark statements in HE
- ACSUG: Identified their employers wishes through surveys
- AQ Austria: employers take part in the decision making procedure
- ANECA, QAA: stakeholders are included in the strategic plan of the QAAs

# An example of immediately impact

- ANECA published at the end of 2013 an Action Plan with Spanish HE stakeholders as a consequence of having attended to this event.
- It has been checked with the objectives of the Strategic Plan 2013-2016 of ANECA
- The fulfilment of the conditions of the review referred to the Strategic Plan for 2014



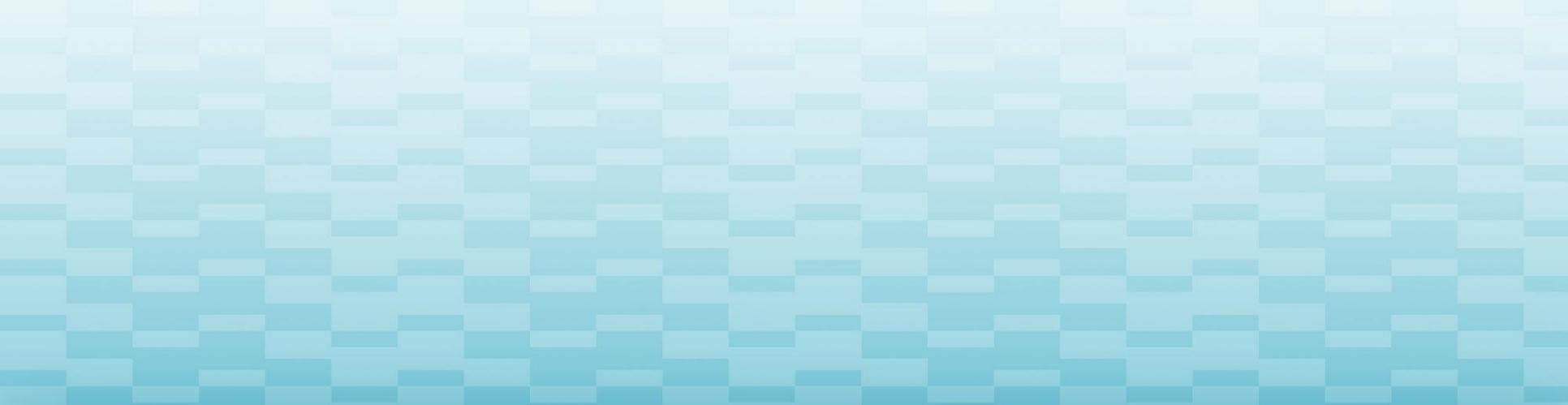
## Conclusions: what are the way forward?

- ENQA will publish a report with the work and conclusions of WG4 in the second half of the year
- QAAs will be able to use this work as a point of reference to rethink their participation in the mid term
- This impact could be done within 5 years
- Debate in other networks off QAA with other QAAs networks as well as other organisation of interest

**Need to make a cross-cultural analysis**

# What are the next steps?

- 1. Request the members to update the last version of the Report**
- 2. Circulate it among the members of the WG4**
- 3. Table of contents**
  - Introduction (objectives)
  - Definition of stakeholder and involvement
  - Methodology:
    - Stocktaking document and the survey.
    - Outcomes of the survey
  - Identifying good practices for improvement at the national level
  - Focal points to contribute to the agenda of ENQA in the BFUG. Special emphasis to the communication plan/strategy
  - Annex 1. Stocktaking documents
  - Annex 2. Questionnaires of the different agencies
  - Annex 3. Breakout sessions
- 4. Submit the Report to the Board for approval**
- 5. Publication of the Report as a ENQA Occasional Paper**



Thank you!

