



HEA

Agency for Development of Higher
Education and Quality Assurance



SELF-EVALUATION REPORT of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance

DATA SHEETS ABOUT THE AGENCY

Name:	HEA, Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance
Address:	Blvd. vojvode Stepe Stepanovića 11 BA - 78000 Banja Luka Bosnia and Herzegovina
Phone:	+387 51 430 510
Fax:	+387 51 462 302
www	hea.gov.ba
Year of foundation:	2008
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Contact person for this activity:	Mr. Boris Ćurković, Deputy Director Boris.Curkovic@hea.gov.ba GSM: +387 61 185 573



Development of quality culture
and clear standards for better
higher education in BiH.

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1. INTRODUCTION

By signing the Bologna Declaration (2003), ratifying the Lisbon Convention (2003), and embarking on the overall development process in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), Bosnia and Herzegovina has committed to conforming its higher education to the common European policy in this field established by the Bologna process. By the *Framework Law on Higher Education* (2007), under which the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance was established, additional provisions were made for higher education reforms and development of new institutional capacities.

The core mission of the Agency, among other things, is to set quality standards, make quality analyses, give recommendations to higher education institutions for removal of shortcomings in the quality of studies and higher education institutions, and to undertake other activities whose ultimate aim is quality assurance in this field oriented toward the integration into the European Higher Education Area. Quality assurance, along with the development of BH higher education qualifications framework and recognition of qualifications, is the key prerequisite for the degrees and awards issued by higher education institutions in BH to be recognized across Europe, which will result in the mobility of students, teachers, sharing of schemes, ideas and practices.

From the very beginning and within the limits of its authority, the Agency has been actively involved in the implementation of higher education reforms. As quality assurance is quite a recent development in the higher education of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Agency has made continuous efforts to raise awareness about the importance of quality assurance in higher education through a wide range of communication activities, targeting in particular the academic community that has the primary responsibility for quality assurance in higher education. Fully aware of the fact that quality assurance mechanisms, either external or internal, would be merely mechanical processes if they did not imply development of culture of quality as well, the Agency dedicated part of its activities to promoting this vital element.

1.1. Briefly about the work of the Agency

The Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance was established under the Framework Law on Higher Education as an independent governing organisation. On 30 October 2008 and under the terms of the Framework law, the Council of Ministers appointed the management of the Agency (Official Gazette of BH, No. 101/08), and on 4 December 2008 the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina formed the Steering Board (Official Gazette of BH, No. 100/08). The Agency has been fully functional since 1 December 2008 and has taken on its responsibilities set out in the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Competences of the Agency are defined in Article 48, 49 and 50 of the Framework Law. In the field of *development of higher education* the competences of the Agency refer to the adoption of criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions and norms for determining minimum standards in higher education, recommendations to the Ministry of Republic of Srpska, cantonal ministries and Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina on

criteria and standards for establishment and closure of higher education institutions and re-structuring of study programmes, provision of advice to competent ministries on issues relating to work and development policies, determining standards of quality, quality analysis, giving recommendations for the remedy of shortcomings in the quality of studies and higher education institutions, representing Bosnia and Herzegovina in international organisations for quality in higher education, and other competences laid down by the Framework law. In the field of *accreditation* the Agency is empowered to set criteria for selection and establishment of the list of national and international experts that conduct quality assessment and review and give recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes, appoint panels for accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes, select experts from the list of experts, give recommendations on each conducted accreditation, review compliance of the accreditation decision with criteria and norms for determining minimum standards in higher education and keep a National register of accredited higher education institutions. Article 50 lays down that the Agency shall elaborate a manual on the model and content of diploma and diploma supplement issued by accredited higher education institutions.

On exercising its statutory responsibilities the Agency adopted the Manual on the model and content of diploma and diploma supplement issued by higher education institutions (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina No. 86/09) - Article 50 of the Framework law, and documents necessary for creating the list of national and international experts that conduct quality assessment and review and give recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions (Article 48 of the Framework law). Furthermore, the Agency carried out a public competition procedure to establish the list of national and international experts who conduct quality assessment and review and give recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions, which resulted in the list of 334 experts that was established under the Article 49 of the Framework law. The list was adopted by all education ministries in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the competent authority of the Brčko District. The established list contains 334 experts in total divided in four respective categories as follows: representatives of the academic community in BH - 143 experts; international experts - 96 experts; representatives of the economy and practice - 48 experts, and students - 47 experts. These experts underwent the necessary training.

The Agency also issued the Decision on criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina No. 75/10), the Decision on norms for determining minimum standards in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina No. 100/11), the Rule book on keeping the National register of accredited higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina No. 91/11), the Instruction for reviewing the compliance of decision on accreditation with the minimum standards in higher education and criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (adopted on 4 November 2011 and published on the web site of the Agency), as well as Recommendations on criteria and standards to the Ministry of the Republic of Srpska, cantonal ministries and Brčko District of BH for establishment and closure of higher education institutions and for re-structuring of study programmes and

Recommendations on criteria for the licensing of higher education institutions and study programmes (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina No. 13/12).

All of these documents were issued in dialogue with higher education institutions and competent education authorities. Trainings, workshops and meetings were organised to discuss the content of the documents, and public consultations were held to be able to receive comments on the documents and proposals by all parties concerned (higher education institutions, student organisations, ministries).

One of the responsibilities of the Agency is also to represent Bosnia and Herzegovina in the international organisations for quality in higher education. The Agency has established a successful cooperation with quality assurance agencies from the South East Europe and EU. So far, Agency has signed four memoranda of understanding with agencies from Germany, Austria, Bulgaria and Russia. Agency is the full member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education INQAAHE, Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education CEENQA. Also, Agency is an associate member of the European Association for Quality Assurance ENQA. International cooperation that the Agency achieved through direct implementation of an international project of the Austrian Development Agency, cooperation with SUS BH, WUS Austria, participation in consortia for implementation of various Tempus projects greatly contributed not only to the enhancement of quality assurance and development in higher education but also to the promotion of higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this respect, the Agency will in the future steer all its capacities towards the achievement of the Bologna Process goals defined in the Framework law and making Bosnia and Herzegovina become part of the European Higher Education Area.

2. OVERVIEW OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Institutional organisation of the higher education sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina is determined by the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, entities and cantons and the Statute of the Brčko District defining therein statutory responsibilities in the area of education.

Full and undivided competence for education lies with the Republic of Srpska, ten cantons in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Each of the twelve administrative divisions has its own ministry for education, legislation in this field, budgets for education, authority to make education policies, and all other rights and obligations arising from the mandate of the competent education authority, responsible for organisation and functioning of education in its area of jurisdiction.

Hence, in Bosnia and Herzegovina there is no constitutional competence over education at the state level, and the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina was adopted with an aim to enable coordination, harmonisation and implementation of the European higher education reforms in compliance with the Bologna Process principles.

Although Bosnia and Herzegovina has been a signatory of the Bologna Declaration since 2003, it was not until 2007 that a major breakthrough in higher education reform was made, when the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina was adopted which allowed for the building of new institutional capacities in this field, establishment of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance and the Centre for Information and Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education. Apart from establishing the body for law enforcement and implementation of international obligations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Framework law defined the quality assurance framework in higher education, organisation of higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and responsibilities of the education authorities in this field.

Article 63 of the Framework law sets out the time frame of 6 months within which the education authorities were obliged to comply their legislation on higher education with the Framework law. However, the process of compliance took a lot longer, more specifically; the process is still under way today, which is evident from the Table 1 below.

Table 1 Legislation on higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Entity/canton	Applicable legislation on higher education	Date of enactment
Republic of Srpska	"Official Gazette of the Republic of Srpska", No. 73/10 and 104/11	30 July 2010 21 October 2011
Brčko District	"Official Gazette of the Brčko District of BH", No. 30/09	23 September 2009
Una-Sana Canton	"Official Journal of the Una-Sana Canton", No. 08/09	15 June 2009
Posavina Canton	"Official Journal of the Posavina Canton", No. 01/10	December 2009
Tuzlanski kanton	"Official Journal of the Tuzla Canton", No. 08/08 and 12/09	28 July 2008 9 November 2009
Zenica-Doboj Canton	"Official Journal of the ZE-DO Canton", No. 06/09	27 April 2009
West Herzegovina Canton	"Official Journal of the West Herzegovina Canton", No. 10/09	6 July 2009
Sarajevo Canton	"Official Journal of the Sarajevo Canton", No. 22/10	27 August 2010
Canton 10	"Official Journal of the Canton 10", No. 09/09	10 November 2009
Bosnian Podrinje Canton	"Official Journal of the Bosnian Podrinje Canton", No. 02/10	28 January 2010
Herzegovina-Neretva Canton	"Official Journal of the HNC", No. 4/12	13 April 2012
Central Bosnia Canton	No applicable law	

Article 10 of the Framework Law states that higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina are universities and colleges. The Framework law does not extend to faculties

of theology, theology schools and academies. These can be university constituents and it regulated by a special agreement.

University is a higher education institution providing both research and education, offering academic degrees in all three cycles and delivering at least five different study programmes from at least three different academic disciplines, whereas colleges provide education only at undergraduate (first cycle) level offering at least one study programme from one discipline. Higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is structured into three cycles which is in line with the Bologna principles. The first cycle leads to the academic title of completed undergraduate studies [the degree of Bachelor] or equivalent, obtained after no less than three years and no more than four years of full time study of at least 180 or 240 ECTS credit points. This does not apply to the medical sciences with the first cycle carrying 360 ECTS. One semester carries 30 ECTS credit points in each cycle.

The second cycle leads to the academic title of master or equivalent, obtained after the completion of undergraduate level, it lasts for one or two years and carries 60 or 120 ECTS credit points, in that way that the total with the first cycle represents 300 ECTS points.

The third cycle leads to the academic degree of doctor or equivalent; it lasts for three years and has 180 ECTS points. Access to higher education is open to those successfully completing the four-year secondary education in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the academic 2011/2012 there were 43 higher education providers, broken down into 10 public and 23 private institutions, as shown in the graph in **Appendix 1**.

The Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance keeps records of all higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina in a factsheet and it is regularly updated on the basis of the information obtained by the relevant ministries. This is available on the web site of the Agency:

http://www.hea.gov.ba/kvalitet/evencija_vsu/Lista.aspx.

At 43 higher education institutions and their 182 organisation units there are around 708 study programmes of the first cycle, 595 of the second cycle and 86 programmes of the third cycle being delivered, i.e. a total of 1390 study programmes in all three cycles, as shown in the **Appendix 1**.

Although all higher education legislation organises a three-cycle structure of studies, the table above shows that all public universities, and to some extent private, offer first and second cycles of studies in compliance with Bologna, whereas the implementation of the third cycle is only at the initial phase.

The key issues encountered by higher education institutions in the implementation of first and second cycle according to Bologna principles are funds, teaching staff and infrastructural capacities.

3. THE SELF-EVALUATION PROCESS

Implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) has been a special priority of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance in its work to the day. Since the system of ESG is based on a periodic external review of higher education institutions, but also the periodic review of quality assurance agencies, after four years of work the Agency decided to undergo an external review by independent experts. For that purpose this self-evaluation report was produced reflecting on each standard set out in Parts 2 and 3 of the ESG.

The best known and most commonly used system of external review of quality assurance agencies was developed by ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education), and compliance with the ESG is a precondition for full membership of this association. Also, European agencies that comply with the ESG in their work are included in the EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education). Given that external quality assurance activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in which the Agency is involved, began only this year (2012), the Agency deems there to be insufficient practice to seek external review by ENQA.

The Self-evaluation report and the pending external evaluation of the Agency are part of the activities of the Tempus project *"Strengthening Quality Assurance System within Western Balkan HEIs in Support of National and Regional Planning - CUBRIK"*, whose coordinator is the University of Alicante in Spain. These activities are aimed at developing capacities of the Agency and strengthening human resources in terms of training and preparation for ENQA membership after we have met the main precondition for full membership, which implies conducting external quality assurance activities for at least two years. Moreover, the recommendations expected to be received from the review team, in terms of the assessment of compliance with the European standards and guidelines (ESG) in our work, will strengthen our development capacities and guide us through the path and ways in which changes are to be implemented.

The Agency has in its work so far adopted all the documents within its jurisdiction. However, their full implementation is still underway. With regard to quality assurance, five higher education institutions have prepared their self-evaluation reports against the Criteria set by the Agency and submitted request for accreditation to their respective education authorities. At the proposal of relevant education authorities, the Agency appointed five panels for accreditation that will conduct site-visits to HEIs after the summer break, at the beginning of the following semester. At this point there is no external review report, so that this external evaluation of the Agency can be characterized as kind of *ex-ante* evaluation.

3.1. The Self-evaluation team

In view of writing the Self-evaluation report, a working group was formed at the Agency, which was responsible for drafting the document. This group comprised officials from each organisation unit of the Agency. Each member of the working group was assigned a

specific section of the self-evaluation to be explored, after which joint meetings were held to further discuss and elaborate the proposed content. Eventually, the draft document was complemented with parts discussed and agreed upon in the joint sessions.

The Self-evaluation team is composed of:

1. Boris Ćurković, deputy director, head of the team
2. Benjamin Muhamedbegović, assistant director for quality assurance
3. Maja Macan, senior official for quality assurance
4. Sanela Pašić Delahmetović, professional advisor for higher education development
5. Jelena Šantić, senior official for higher education development
6. Aida Savić, senior official for higher education development
7. Slavica Škoro, professional advisor for public relations
8. Bojan Stevandić, financial assistant

This Self-evaluation report emerged as a result of the teamwork. With this report the Agency conducted internal analysis of its strengths and advantages, but also identified weaknesses and threats to which it is exposed.

4. ESG STANDARDS

4.1. ESG 2

ESG 2.1 USE OF INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES

STANDARD:

External quality assurance procedures should take into account the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

GUIDELINES:

The standards for internal quality assurance contained in Part 1 provide a valuable basis for the external quality assessment process. It is important that the institutions' own internal policies and procedures are carefully evaluated in the course of external procedures, to determine the extent to which the standards are being met. If higher education institutions are to be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of their own internal quality assurance processes, and if those processes properly assure quality and standards, then external processes might be less intensive than otherwise.

Article 48 of the Framework Law on Higher Education in BH prescribes that the Agency is competent to set clear, transparent and accessible criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions and set norms determining minimum standards in higher education. In exercising this responsibility, the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance adopted the **Decision on Criteria for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions ("criteria")**, that are derived from the ESG and Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina ("Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina" No. 13/08) which are entirely complied with the ESG. The Agency also passed the **Decision on Norms for Determining Minimum Standards in Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina ("Standards")**.

Criteria are common to all higher education institutions, both public and private universities and colleges, and they will be equally and consistently applied on all higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina are the following:

- a) Development and strategy of higher education institution;
- b) Management, internal quality assurance and quality culture;
- c) Procedures for quality assurance of study programmes;
- d) Student assessment procedures;
- e) Human resources;
- f) Quality of physical resources;
- g) Information systems;
- h) Public information;
- i) International relations.

Table 2: Alignment of Criteria for accreditation of HEIs in BH with ESG 1

ESG 1		CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION OF HEIs IN BH	
1	QA policy	1	Development and strategy of higher education institution
		2	Management, internal quality assurance and quality culture
2	Study programme	3	Procedures for quality assurance of study programmes
3	Assessment of student	4	Student assessment procedures
4	Teaching staff	5	Human resources
5	Use of premises	6	Quality of physical resources
6	Information	7	Information systems
7	Publicity	8	Public information
		9	International relations

Decision on norms for determining minimum standards in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was adopted in 2011, sets out rules for attaining standards for internal and external quality assurance in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Criteria for accreditation are entirely derived from standards for internal quality assurance. In the accreditation process the attainment of a particular standard is judged against the fulfilment of a particular criterion (e.g. Standard 1.1 is judged against the fulfilment of criterion 1. Development and strategy of higher education institution and criterion 2. Organisation of higher education institution and system of internal quality assurance).

Standards for external quality assurance set out that this process is based on peer review, where the initial phase is the drafting of a self-evaluation report of a higher education institution, which in its structure should contain description of each criterion and standard for internal quality assurance.

ESG 2.2 DEVELOPMENT OF EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES

STANDARD:

The aims and objectives of quality assurance processes should be determined before the processes themselves are developed, by all those responsible (including higher education institutions) and should be published with a description of the procedures to be used.

GUIDELINES:

In order to ensure clarity of purpose and transparency of procedures, external quality assurance methods should be designed and developed through a process involving key stakeholders, including higher education institutions. The procedures that are finally agreed should be published and should contain explicit statements of the aims and objectives of the processes as well as a description of the procedures to be used.

As external quality assurance makes demands on the institutions involved, a preliminary impact assessment should be undertaken to ensure that the procedures to be adopted are appropriate and do not interfere more than necessary with the normal work of higher education institutions.

It has been the practice of the Agency to adopt all documents in a dialogue with higher education institutions and competent education authorities. All major documents were adopted after having organized workshops, conferences, and meetings with key stakeholders that involved all higher education institutions, ministries and national and international experts. When a draft document is made, it is then referred by the Agency to all higher education institutions and ministries, at the very least, and to student organisations, if found necessary. Their comments, suggestions and proposals are delivered in writing and are later on discussed at the Agency before determining a final proposal for the document.

Furthermore, many training workshops for external experts, QA officials at higher education institutions and students were held in the framework of different projects with an aim to reach common understanding of all activities.

All documents issued by the Agency are published in the Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina and on the web site of the Agency. In addition to this, the Agency printed a collection of all the documents (HEA documents) that it had adopted, and distributed it among the academic community and ministries. The Agency employs a professional advisor for public relations whose responsibility is, among other things, to keep up a professional relationship with the media and all national and international partners in the area of higher education.

Through its involvement in ESABIH Tempus project the Agency set up a new practice - pilot activities. The preliminary draft of criteria for accreditation of study programmes were piloted in the recently finished pilot accreditation of 33 study programmes. Drawing on the experiences from these pilot activities, the Agency is currently working on the elaboration of the Criteria (which are expected to be adopted in the second half of the year).

ESG 2.3 CRITERIA FOR DECISIONS

STANDARD:

Any formal decisions made as a result of an external quality assurance activity should be based on explicit published criteria that are applied consistently.

GUIDELINES:

Formal decisions made by quality assurance agencies have a significant impact on the institutions and programmes that are judged. In the interests of equity and reliability, decisions should be based on published criteria and interpreted in a consistent manner. Conclusions should be based on recorded evidence and agencies should have in place ways of moderating conclusions, if necessary.

The Agency adopted and published the Criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (9 criteria). Criteria for study programmes are in the drafting phase (there will be 7 criteria). Final decisions on accreditation outcome (as the key element of external quality assurance being applied in Bosnia and Herzegovina) are based on the compliance with the criteria.

The way in which criteria assessment is conducted and accreditation decision is reached is specifically defined in the document "Decision on Norms for Determining Minimum Standards in Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina":

"All the decisions of the Panel are typically made by consensus, and in an event when the consensus is not reached, each Panel member can pass his or her opinion. The Panel shall assess compliance with each criterion descriptively by applying the following terms:

- full compliance,*
- substantial compliance,*
- partial compliance,*
- non-compliance."*

On the basis of the abovementioned Decision, the panel provides the opinion about the accreditation outcome in its external report, in the following way:

- a. **accreditation granted** to higher education institution or study programme only then when all criteria are judged as being in full or substantial compliance,*
- b. **conditional accreditation** or issuance of a letter of expectation in an event when more than one half of the criteria is fully or substantially complied with, and the remaining are partially complied with, and*
- c. issuance of the decision on **accreditation being denied** in an event when at least one criterion has not been met or when more than one half of the criteria is partially complied with.*

On the basis of the Panel's opinion presented in the external report, the Agency makes a recommendation on accreditation and forwards it to the competent education authority, which then makes the final accreditation decision.

Afterwards, the Agency assesses the compliance of accreditation decision with the norms and criteria, and if non-compliance is identified, the Agency makes a recommendation to the Steering Board to take further measures, up to the measure of annulling the accreditation decision. Education authorities have the right to appeal to the Steering Board against the decision to annul the accreditation decision.

ESG 2.4 PROCESSES FIT FOR PURPOSE

STANDARD:

All external quality assurance processes should be designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for them.

GUIDELINES:

Quality assurance agencies within the EHEA undertake different external processes for different purposes and in different ways. It is of the first importance that agencies should operate procedures which are fit for their own defined and published purposes. Experience has shown, however, that there are some widely-used elements of external review processes which not only help to ensure their validity, reliability and usefulness, but also provide a basis for the European dimension to quality assurance.

Amongst these elements the following are particularly noteworthy:

- insistence that the experts undertaking the external quality assurance activity have appropriate skills and are competent to perform their task;*
- the exercise of care in the selection of experts;*
- the provision of appropriate briefing or training for experts;*
- the use of international experts;*
- participation of students;*
- ensuring that the review procedures used are sufficient to provide adequate evidence to support the findings and conclusions reached;*
- the use of the self-evaluation/site visit/draft report/published report/follow-up model of review;*
- recognition of the importance of institutional improvement and enhancement policies as a fundamental element in the assurance of quality.*

External quality assurance is carried out for the purpose of accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes. The Framework law on higher education precludes access to public services or other organisations for those graduating from non-accredited higher education institutions. Compulsory accreditation and its purpose is also prescribed in the higher education legislation adopted by education authorities.

However, apart from the accreditation, as a binary decision about higher education institution and/or study programme, quality assurance system, defined in the documents of the Agency, implies quality enhancement as well. Panel is required to give recommendations on the improvement of institution's performance in each criterion for accreditation, and higher education institution is required to design follow-up procedures to address the recommendations given in the external evaluation report.

Every panel for accreditation should have at least one expert from the following four categories:

- academic community
- students
- international experts
- labour market representatives.

All of these categories of experts are selected in the process of public competition, which is announced at least once a year, and more often if necessary, in three large-circulation daily newspapers distributed throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, and on the web site of the Agency. In extreme cases, when in the course of public competition there were no applicants with expertise in a certain field of study, then, with the prior approval from the Steering Board, the Agency can select an expert to conduct external quality assurance activities on the basis of the call and in cooperation with international agencies.

Setting up of the commission for selection of national and international experts and criteria for selection of national and international experts are defined in the documents adopted by HEA. Commission for determining list of experts consists of five members, having a representative of each of the following institutions: Rectors' Conference, one cantonal ministry, Ministry of the Republic of Srpska, Brčko District and the Agency.

The proposed list of experts containing: 143 representatives of the academic community in BH, 48 representatives of economy and practice (labor market), 96 international experts and 47 students was adopted by all education authorities, after which it was published on the web site of the Agency making it, thus, publicly available.

In the framework of the Tempus ESABIH project, during 2010, 14 workshops were held, providing training for 228 experts from the list of experts. After the adoption of Criteria training was organized on how to draft a self-evaluation report. This training involved QA coordinators from all higher education institutions in BH.

ESG 2.5 REPORTING

STANDARD:

Reports should be published and should be written in a style which is clear and readily accessible to its intended readership. Any decisions, commendations or recommendations contained in reports should be easy for a reader to find.

GUIDELINES:

In order to ensure maximum benefit from external quality assurance processes, it is important that reports should meet the identified needs of the intended readership. Reports are sometimes intended for different readership groups and this will require careful attention to structure, content, style and tone.

In general, reports should be structured to cover description, analysis (including relevant evidence), conclusions, commendations, and recommendations. There should be sufficient preliminary explanation to enable a lay reader to understand the purposes of the review, its form, and the criteria used in making decisions. Key findings, conclusions and recommendations should be easily locatable by readers.

Reports should be published in a readily accessible form and there should be opportunities for readers and users of the reports (both within the relevant institution and outside it) to comment on their usefulness.

The Agency has so far not received any report, since no single accreditation process has been completed; however structure and publication of external report are clearly defined in the Decision on norms for determining minimum standards in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

"Report of the Panel should be written in a style, which is clear and intelligible, in one of the official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as in English, and its structure should, at least, contain the following:

- *introduction with basic information regarding higher education institution and organisation units, composition of the Panel, the period of the assessment and review,*
- *short overview of the Panel work,*
- *analysis of and opinion on the application of standards for internal quality assurance and descriptive grade of compliance with each criterion for accreditation,*
- *recommendations for quality enhancement,*
- *opinion on the accreditation outcome, as follows:*
 - a. **accreditation granted** to higher education institution or study programme only then when all criteria are judged as being in full or substantial compliance,
 - b. **conditional accreditation** or issuance of a letter of expectation in an event when more than one half of the criteria is fully or substantially complied with, and the remaining are partially complied with, and
 - c. issuance of the decision on **accreditation being denied** in an event when at least one criterion has not been met or when more than one half of the criteria is partially complied with.

Higher education institution shall publish the report of the Panel on its web site upon the completion of the accreditation process, and so shall the Agency on its web site."

ESG 2.6 FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES

STANDARD:

Quality assurance processes which contain recommendations for action or which require a subsequent action plan, should have a predetermined follow-up procedure which is implemented consistently.

GUIDELINES:

Quality assurance is not principally about individual external scrutiny events: It should be about continuously trying to do a better job. External quality assurance does not end with the publication of the report and should include a structured follow-up procedure to ensure that recommendations are dealt with appropriately and any required action plans drawn up and implemented. This may involve further meetings with institutional or programme representatives.

The objective is to ensure that areas identified for improvement are dealt with speedily and that further enhancement is encouraged.

Given that no single accreditation process was completed, there is no evidence of practice associated with follow-up procedures, although they are explicitly defined in the Decision on norms for determining minimum standards in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

“Recommendation on the follow-up activities: Upon receiving the formal decision on accreditation higher education institution shall draw up an action plan with follow-up activities to be undertaken specifying the timeframe and persons in charge of the implementation of recommendations for internal quality improvement from the Panel report. The action plan shall be published on its web site. Higher education institution should produce a report once a year on activities that have been carried out to implement the action plan. The report should contain the undertaken activities, the extent to which the implementation has been carried out, as well as indication of deviations from the action plan, if any, explaining the circumstances within which these deviations occurred. The report on follow-up activities should be published by the higher education institution on its web site.”

ESG 2.7 PERIODIC REVIEWS

STANDARD:

External quality assurance of institutions and/or programmes should be undertaken on a cyclical basis. The length of the cycle and the review procedures to be used should be clearly defined and published in advance.

GUIDELINES:

Quality assurance is not a static but a dynamic process. It should be continuous and not “once in a lifetime”. It does not end with the first review or with the completion of the formal follow-up procedure. It has to be periodically renewed. Subsequent external reviews should take into account progress that has been made since the previous event. The process to be used in all external reviews should be clearly defined by the external quality assurance agency and its demands on institutions should not be greater than are necessary for the achievement of its objectives.

“Rules for attaining standards and guidelines for quality assurance in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina” set out that external quality assurance of higher education institutions should be undertaken on a cyclical basis in line with respective governing regulations, having in mind that quality assurance is an on-going process. Accreditation cycles are regulated by respective higher education authorities, with varying lengths of intervals (from 4 to 6 years). For instance, Law on higher education of the Sarajevo Canton stipulates the 5-year cycle (amendment to a 6-years cycle underway), whereas the Law on higher education of the Republic of Srpska prescribes the length of the cycle to be 4 years.

Every subsequent process of quality assurance should take due account of progress achieved after the previous process.

ESG 2.8 SYSTEM-WIDE ANALYSES

STANDARD:

Quality assurance agencies should produce from time to time summary reports describing and analysing the general findings of their reviews, evaluations, assessments etc.

GUIDELINES:

All external quality assurance agencies collect a wealth of information about individual programmes and/or institutions and this provides material for structured analyses across whole higher education systems. Such analyses can provide very useful information about developments, trends, emerging good practice and areas of persistent difficulty or weakness and can become useful tools for policy development and quality enhancement. Agencies should consider including a research and development function within their activities, to help them extract maximum benefit from their work.

Programme of Work of the Agency foresees the process of accreditation of higher education institutions to end in 2012, so that system-wide analysis is expected to be conducted after the ending of accreditation processes. One of the competences of the Agency, under the Framework law on higher education, is to set quality standards, give recommendations to remedy deficiencies in the quality of studies and higher education institutions.

Moreover, another future activities planned to be carried out in the course of accreditation will be to make an Overview of the compliance (application of instruments) with the set Criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions and create a web forum. These will be carried out by the Sector for development of higher education at the Agency by analysing the publicly available sources at the same time taking into consideration the findings and recommendations reached on forums-debates. Aim of this activity is to encourage higher education institutions to reach the highest possible level of compliance with the Criteria for accreditation, and to be able to provide advice to education authorities on an informed basis. This overview will be presented to all higher education institutions and relevant ministries, as well as other stakeholders (Conference of Ministers of Education, Rectors' Conference, etc).

4.2. ESG 3

ESG 3.1 USE OF EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

STANDARD:

The external quality assurance of agencies should take into account the presence and effectiveness of the external quality assurance processes described in Part 2 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

GUIDELINES:

The standards for external quality assurance contained in Part 2 provide a valuable basis for the external quality assessment process. The standards reflect best practices and experiences gained through the development of external quality assurance in Europe since the early 1990s. It is

therefore important that these standards are integrated into the processes applied by external quality assurance agencies towards the higher education institutions.

The standards for external quality assurance should together with the standards for external quality assurance agencies constitute the basis for professional and credible external quality assurance of higher education institutions.

The Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance recognized the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) as its ultimate goal. Thus, all quality assurance related activities performed by the Agency are underpinned by the compliance with the ESG. The question of presence and effectiveness of external quality assurance activities outlined in ESG 2 is discussed in detail in the Section 4.1 ESG 2 of this Report.

ESG 3.2 OFFICIAL STATUS

STANDARD:

Agencies should be formally recognised by competent public authorities in the European Higher Education Area as agencies with responsibilities for external quality assurance and should have an established legal basis. They should comply with any requirements of the legislative jurisdictions within which they operate.

The Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance was established under the law (Framework Law on Higher Education and Quality Assurance in Bosnia and Herzegovina). Its form of organisation (independent governing organisation) and legal competences (in the area of higher education development and quality assurance) were established by law.

The Agency operates within a highly complex legal system, due to the fact that the constitutional jurisdiction over education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided between the two entities (Federation of BH and the Republic of Srpska) and District (Brčko). In the Federation of BH entity jurisdiction over education is awarded to 10 cantons. This implies that the state of BH has no direct constitutional responsibility for education and all levels of education (including the higher education level) fall within exclusive competence of the entity of the Republic of Srpska, 10 cantons in the Federation of BH and the Brčko District, corresponding in total to 12 competent education ministries in charge of making their own policies.

Level of shared activities (including foundation of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance with its competences) was established by the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was adopted by the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina and which represents the key document and legal framework for the implementation of the Bologna process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The law was enacted in 2007 following a four-years long academic and political debate.

Hence, legal status and competences of the Agency (including the area of higher education) are explicitly defined by the law in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

With regard to the recognisability of the Agency in other countries (European Higher Education Area), the Agency is strongly committed to the international (European in particular) cooperation. Since December 2009 the Agency is a full member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), in February 2010 the Agency became an associate member of the European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQA), and in May 2010 it was granted a full membership of the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA).

By the associate membership of the European Association for Quality Assurance, the Agency was given access to the information and training, as well as participation in workshops and topical events relating to the standards, methods and criteria for quality assurance. Full membership of ENQA and inclusion in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) are goals that the Agency will strive to achieve in the following period.

Apart from the abovementioned associations, the Agency also established bilateral cooperation with peer agencies. Particularly intensive cooperation has been established with the regional agencies (CAQA Serbia, ASHE Croatia, Slovenian agency, AQAL Albania) encountering similar difficulties in their work, which makes sharing of experiences with them particularly important. Moreover, the Agency initiated the signing of memoranda of cooperation with member agencies of ENQA, which set out the agreement and commitment to mutual cooperation and provide a framework for initiating specific bilateral activities. Until now, the Agency entered into such agreements with the German EVALAG agency, Bulgarian NEAA, Austrian OAR and Russian NCPA.

The Agency has to the date organised 4 international or regional conferences aimed at sharing experiences and practices with peer agencies.

ESG 3.3 ACTIVITIES

STANDARD:

Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities (at institutional or programme level) on a regular basis.

GUIDELINES:

These may involve evaluation, review, audit, assessment, accreditation or other similar activities and should be part of the core functions of the agency.

The Agency set Criteria for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and the Decision on Norms for Determining Minimum Standards in Higher Education. These documents prescribe an on-going, continued activity of internal and external quality assurance on all higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Criteria are explicitly concerned with the institutional accreditation, and they are presented in more detail in Section ESG 2.1., and the periodic accreditation is outlined in Section ESG 2.7.

Until now and in line with these documents and other policies (legislation on higher education of cantons and entity, regulations on accreditation in cantons, procedures for

accreditation in the Republic of Srpska, etc), 5 out of 43 institutions requested accreditation, and other institutions are drafting their self-evaluation reports.

Concerning the study programmes, EU Tempus ESABIH project allowed for the drafting of criteria for accreditation of study programmes that have undergone the pilot phase within which the accreditation of 33 study programmes from 8 public universities in BH was carried out. External reports are being drafted and at the same time Criteria for accreditation of study programmes are being finalised on the basis of experiences drawn from the 33 accreditations.

In the previous period, the Agency has been committed to the institutional building (meeting logistical, technical and personnel requirements for work) and preparations for quality assurance processes. System of quality assurance in higher education was not established easily in any of the European countries (47 European and Euro-Asian countries have so far joined the Bologna process) and it required a dialogue of several years among three key groups of players: higher education institutions developing internal quality systems and being the most responsible for the quality of education they provide, competent ministries ensuring the regulatory framework for the functioning and public financing of higher education, and state agencies providing opinion, independently from higher education institutions and ministries, about the quality of education and compliance with standards and criteria. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, in which today a total of 43 higher education institutions operate in practically 12 respective education systems, this job is even harder given the different situation, level of development and arrangement of higher education systems in 10 cantons of the Federation of BH, Republic of Srpska and Brčko District of BH.

Although the accreditation process of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina has just started, the Agency fulfilled all its obligations provided for by the Framework Law on Higher Education, and has until today adopted the following documents:

- Decision on Criteria for Election of Domestic and International Experts to Provide Assessment and Conduct Quality Reviews and Give Recommendation on Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes in BH ("Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina" No. 88/09),
- Decision on Manner of Creating Commission for Election of Domestic and International Experts to Provide Assessment and Conduct Quality Reviews and Give Recommendation on Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes, No. 01-50-624-1/09 of 6 October 2009,
- Public competition for the election of domestic and international experts to provide assessment and conduct quality reviews and give recommendation on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes,
- Instruction on Form and Content of Diploma and Diploma Supplement ("Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina" No. 86/09),
- Criteria for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, ("Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina" No. 75/10),

- Rulebook on Keeping the National Register of Accredited Higher Education Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina,
- Instruction for Reviewing the Compliance of Decision on Accreditation with the Minimum Standards in Higher Education and Criteria for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina,
- Decision on Norms for Determining Minimum Standards in Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the accompanying Rules for attaining the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance,
- Recommendations on Criteria and Standards to the Ministry of the Republic of Srpska, Cantonal Ministries and the Brčko District for Establishment and Closure of Higher Education Institutions and Re-structuring of Study Programmes,
- Recommendations on Criteria for the Licensing of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

ESG 3.4 RESOURCES

STANDARD:

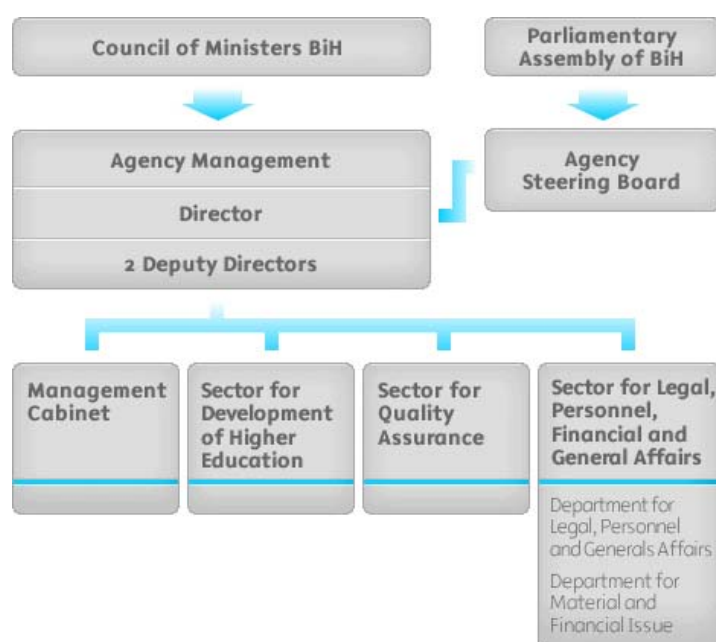
Agencies should have adequate and proportional resources, both human and financial, to enable them to organise and run their external quality assurance process(es) in an effective and efficient manner, with appropriate provision for the development of their processes and procedures.

Since its establishment and start of operations the Agency made great efforts towards the institutional building and equipment.

Human resources

The size of staff employed at the Agency is determined by the Rule book on internal organisation of the Agency, where a total of 35 job positions are classified (systematised). Currently, the Agency has 20 employees, and a certain number of persons employed on a temporary basis (3-5).

Organisation of the Agency is outlined in the diagram below:



Structure of employees currently employed is the following: three (3) appointees - management of the Agency, nine (9) civil servants and eight (8) employees. In the first half of 2012, the Agency outsourced five (5) freelancers holding a University degree who completed their internship at the Agency in July 2011, passed their public exam and gained the necessary knowledge and experiences in the specific scope of work of the Agency, as well as the ability to work independently. Guided by the policy of building our own capacities from within, we feel that in this way we trained skilled and quality staff that are found to be truly indispensable for this institution.

The Steering Board

The Agency is governed by the Steering Board consisting of 10 members. It is made up of three members belonging to three constituent peoples respectively and one member from the rank of others. Members of the Steering Board of the Agency are elected by the Parliamentary Assembly of BH for a mandate of three years with the possibility of re-election, on the basis of a public competition. The Steering Board takes all decisions by a majority vote, provided that such majority corresponds to at least two thirds of votes of the members from each constituent people. The Steering Board is made up of at least 50% of full university professors.

Financial resources

The Agency is financed from the Budget of institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Article 53 of the Framework Law on Higher Education in BH lays down that the Agency can be financed from its own resources. However, a sub-law to closely regulate the concept of generation of own revenues is yet to be finalised.

In line with the Law on Financing BH Institutions ("Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina" No. 61/04 i 49/09), the Agency elaborates independently the Document of the framework budget for a three-year period, that sets out spending priorities for the given period in accordance with the activities planned by the programme of work of the Agency. This document is discussed by the Professional Board of the Agency. Document of the Framework Budget is a preliminary draft of the budget for the next year outlining the expenditure ceilings to be applied by the Agency in the drafting of the annual Request for allocation of funds from the Budget of institutions of BH, only after they have been approved by the Council of Ministers of BH.

Total operating budget of the Agency in 2011 was **1.613.453,63 KM (824.845,74 EUR)**, out of which 1.240.850,00 KM (634.436,53 EUR) corresponded to the budgetary funds and 372.603,63 KM (190.509,21 EUR) were the funds donated by the Austrian Development Agency. The budget of the Agency is seen to be increasing along with the increase in the amount of planned activities in the scope of the Agency.

Budget of Bosnia and Herzegovina is used for the disbursement of salaries and reimbursements for employees, coverage of all material expenditures, overheads and funds for implementation of planned activities.

Mindful of the above mentioned, the Agency is entirely technically equipped and functional in terms of being capable for a successful discharge of responsibilities from its scope of authority under the circumstances of modern technology.

ESG 3.5 MISSION STATEMENT

STANDARD:

Agencies should have clear and explicit goals and objectives for their work, contained in a publicly available statement.

GUIDELINES:

These statements should describe the goals and objectives of agencies' quality assurance processes, the division of labour with relevant stakeholders in higher education, especially the higher education institutions, and the cultural and historical context of their work. The statements should make clear that the external quality assurance process is a major activity of the agency and that there exists a systematic approach to achieving its goals and objectives. There should also be documentation to demonstrate how the statements are translated into a clear policy and management plan.

Mission of the Agency is derived from its very title: higher education development and quality assurance (in higher education).

Competences of the Agency, and its scope, are clearly defined in Articles 48, 49 and 50 of the Framework Law on Higher Education (compendium of law is presented in annex ***), and the Statute of the Agency.

Division of responsibilities among stakeholders is laid down by law. The quoted provision of the Framework law implies that, in the area of accreditation, the Agency's responsibilities are to set criteria for accreditation and norms for determining minimum standards in higher education, criteria for experts for accreditation, and a list of experts in a public procedure, keep the register of accredited higher education institutions. In each separate accreditation process the Agency is also responsible for: appointing a panel for accreditation on the basis of the proposal given by the respective education authority, making recommendation on accreditation on the basis of the opinion given by the panel for accreditation, reviewing the compliance of the accreditation decision with criteria and norms for determining minimum standards. All responsibilities of the Agency are regulated by the documents (list of and web-link to these are given in the annex ***). Competent education authorities lay down in their regulations (legislation, rulebooks) the competences to prescribe the compulsory accreditation, to run the accreditation processes (the Agency is involved in each separate process in the way described here) and issuance of accreditation decision. Given that there are 12 education authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, their established competences vary to a certain degree. In this respect, the Republic of Srpska established the Agency for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Srpska under the law, whose competences are defined in the Law in Higher Education in the Republic of Srpska, and which together with the Agency conducts the accreditation in the Republic of Srpska. Out of the remaining 11 education authorities only 3 of them (Zenica-Doboj, Unsa-Sana and Herceg-Bosna canton) have so far adopted the accreditation rulebooks. All of the rulebooks conform to the competences of

the Agency stipulated in the Framework law. Higher education institutions are responsible for internal quality assurance system.

The work of the Agency is underpinned by the annual planning and reporting. The annual programmes of work and activity reports are reviewed by the Steering Board, followed by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and are published on the web site of the Agency on a regular basis. The Steering Board of the Agency reports on its work to the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina once a year.

ESG 3.6 INDEPENDENCE

STANDARD:

Agencies should be independent to the extent both that they have autonomous responsibility for their operations and that the conclusions and recommendations made in their reports cannot be influenced by third parties such as higher education institutions, ministries or other stakeholders.

GUIDELINES:

An agency will need to demonstrate its independence through measures, such as:

- its operational independence from higher education institutions and governments is guaranteed in official documentation (e.g. instruments of governance or legislative acts);
- the definition and operation of its procedures and methods, the nomination and appointment of external experts and the determination of the outcomes of its quality assurance processes are undertaken autonomously and independently from governments, higher education institutions, and organs of political influence;
- while relevant stakeholders in higher education, particularly students/learners, are consulted in the course of quality assurance processes, the final outcomes of the quality assurance processes remain the responsibility of the agency.

Status of the Agency is "independent public organisation", according to which the Agency, in compliance with the law, makes decisions independently. The Statute of the Agency (Article 3 paragraph 4) stipulates that: „The Agency shall carry out the external quality assurance activities independently within its jurisdiction“. Competent education authorities and higher education institutions have no institutional influence on the work of the Agency.

Although management of the Agency and the Steering Board are appointed by the government (management is appointed by the Council of Ministers and the Steering Board by the Parliamentary Assembly), all appointments are carried out on the basis of the public competition.

Concerning the selection of experts, the Agency appoints the panels for accreditation on the basis of the proposal given by respective education authority. However, competent education authorities are obliged to propose experts from the list of experts that is established by the Agency in a public procedure and confirmed by 12 education authorities.

Operating decisions at the Agency are taken on the basis of professional analyses carried out by its respective sectors, and after they have been discussed by the Professional Board of the Agency, comprising the director and deputy directors. The work of the the Board is governed by the Rules of Procedures. The Agency drafted instructions for specific standardized procedures (e.g. to review the compliance of the accreditation decision with criteria and norms for determining minimum standards, an instruction was issued that foresees the formation of a commission within the Agency to conduct the review of compliance and submit its findings to the Board). Majority of decisions are required to be approved by the Steering Board. The work of the Steering Board is governed by the Rules of Procedures.

In exercising its responsibilities the Agency is governed by the following principles:

- legality,
- transparency,
- openness,
- accountability,
- efficiency and effectiveness,
- professional impartiality.

The accreditation process is run by education authorities and they make the final accreditation decision. They also establish rights or measures to be taken in dealing with the accredited or non-accredited institutions and programmes. The role of the Agency in this procedure is to give a recommendation on accreditation - compliance with the criteria on the basis of an opinion given by the panel of independent experts.

ESG 3.7 EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE CRITERIA AND PROCESSES USED BY THE AGENCIES

STANDARD:

The processes, criteria and procedures used by agencies should be pre-defined and publicly available. These processes will normally be expected to include:

- a self-assessment or equivalent procedure by the subject of the quality assurance process;
- an external assessment by a group of experts, including, as appropriate, (a) student member(s), and site visits as decided by the agency;
- publication of a report, including any decisions, recommendations or other formal outcomes;
- a follow-up procedure to review actions taken by the subject of the quality assurance process in the light of any recommendations contained in the report.

GUIDELINES:

Agencies may develop and use other processes and procedures for particular purposes.

Agencies should pay careful attention to their declared principles at all times, and ensure both that their requirements and processes are managed professionally and that their conclusions and decisions are reached in a consistent manner, even though the decisions are formed by groups of different people.

Agencies that make formal quality assurance decisions, or conclusions which have formal consequences should have an appeals procedure. The nature and form of the appeals procedure should be determined in the light of the constitution of each agency.

The Agency adopted the Criteria for accreditation and the Decision on norms for determining minimum standards in higher education. Each accreditation decision is made exclusively on the basis of these two documents, and on the basis of the compliance with the criteria and alignment with the standards. Both of the documents were adopted after extensive public consultation had been conducted, published in the Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the web site of the Agency, and in a special publication that was produced by the Agency and widely distributed among all stakeholders.

The Decision on norms for determining minimum standards in higher education explicitly prescribes a model of external quality assurance based on 4 steps:

- Self-evaluation report drafted by a higher education institution,
- Setting up of a Panel and site visit to the higher education institution,
- Published external report, and
- Follow-up activities undertaken by the higher education institution following the recommendations contained in the Panel's external report.

In terms of appeal procedures, the Framework law on Higher Education lays down the competence of the Agency to assess the compliance of accreditation decision with the norms and criteria, and if non-compliance is identified, make a recommendation to the Steering Board to take further measures, up to the measure of annulling the accreditation decision. Education authorities have the right to appeal to the Steering Board against the decision to annul the accreditation decision.“ A specific Instruction was issued to regulate this procedure and define the actions taken by the Agency. However, appeal procedures within the Agency have not yet been developed. Since the Agency has not yet made any recommendation on accreditation“, there is no evidence of practice. However, the Agency is considering an option to offer a draft of both recommendation and external report to the higher education institution for comment before determining the recommendation, and to make the final recommendation by taking into consideration the institution's feedback.

ESG 3.8 ACCOUNTABILITY PROCEDURES

STANDARD:

Agencies should have in place procedures for their own accountability.

GUIDELINES:

These procedures are expected to include the following:

1. A published policy for the assurance of the quality of the agency itself, made available on its website;
2. Documentation which demonstrates that:
 - the agency's processes and results reflect its mission and goals of quality assurance;
 - the agency has in place, and enforces, a no-conflict-of-interest mechanism in the work of its external experts;

- the agency has reliable mechanisms that ensure the quality of any activities and material produced by subcontractors, if some or all of the elements in its quality assurance procedure are subcontracted to other parties;
- the agency has in place internal quality assurance procedures which include an internal feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback from its own staff and council/board); an internal reflection mechanism (i.e. means to react to internal and external recommendations for improvement); and an external feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback from experts and reviewed institutions for future development) in order to inform and underpin its own development and improvement.

3. A mandatory cyclical external review of the agency's activities at least once every five years.

To the date, the Agency has established the internal quality system relating to the work of the Agency. The Rule book on internal organisation of the Agency was adopted, along with 15 other rule books defining operating and governing procedures (Rule book on internal procedures for making and recording liabilities and signing financial papers, Rule book on the treasury management for regular activity, Decision on setting the treasury maximum, usage and responsibility for material and physical assurance of ready cash, Decision on internal procedures for collecting and storing the ready cash in the treasury of the Agency, Rule book on internal supervision, Rule book on representation and presents, Rule book on the usage and storage of the seal, Rule book on internal procedures for the public procurement of goods, services or works by direct agreement, Rule book on terms and usage of company vehicles and usage of private vehicles for business purposes, Rule book on business trips, Rule book on the list and source of resources, Rule book on financial rewards, Rule book on employment, etc). The operations of the Agency are subject to review by the Audit Office of the Institutions of BH. So far, the Agency has received external audit reports every year, improving its system of internal procedures and reviews in view of achieving better performance.

With regard to the activities of the Agency in the area of accreditation, the internal quality assurance system is still being developed and documents are adopted according to the urgency of the process (so far only one document was adopted: Instruction for reviewing the compliance of the decision on accreditation with the minimum standards in higher education and criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Formal establishment of the internal quality system was foreseen by the Program of work for 2012.

This Self-evaluation report and the subsequent external review is the first external evaluation of the Agency. The Agency plans to apply for external review by ENQA (most likely in 2014) two years after the beginning of accreditation, when there is adequate amount of practice.



HEA

Agency for Development of Higher
Education and Quality Assurance



APPENDICES

1. List of higher education institutions
2. Excerpt from the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina related to the Agency
3. Criteria for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina
4. Decision on Norms for Determining Minimal Standards in Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina
5. Annual Report for 2011
6. List of other related documents with web-links

APPENDIX 1:

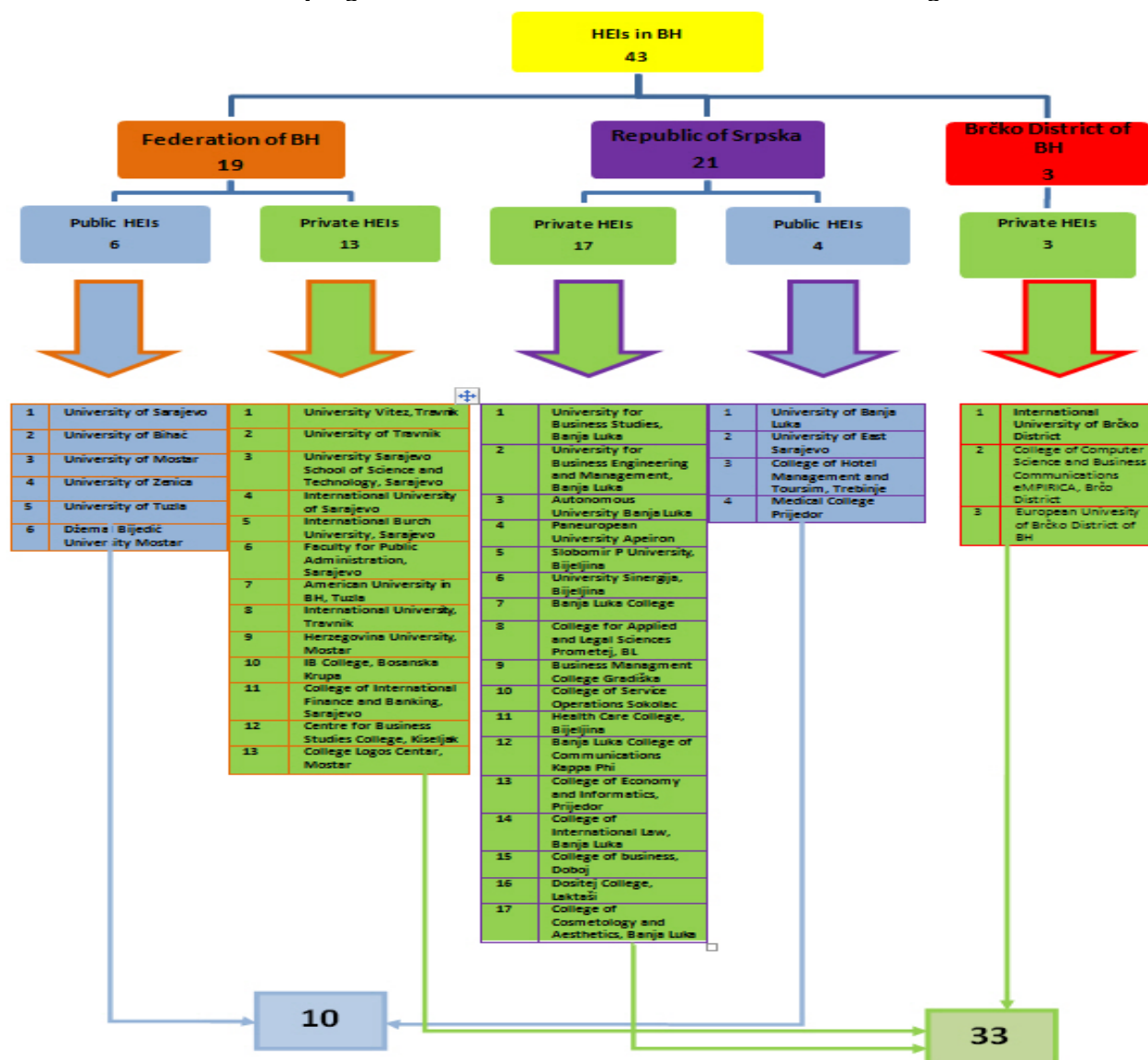
LIST OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

**Graph shows all higher education institutions divided on private and public,
with entities' distribution**

**Table shows a list of higher education institutions with numbers of faculties
and study programs**

(Related to the Section 2. Overview of Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, p.5)

Overview of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina



Breakdown of organisation units and study programmes of the first, the second and the third cycle on 43 HEIs in Bosnia and Herzegovina

No	HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION	Faculties	Number of study programmes			Study programs in total	Data source
			1 st cycle	2 nd cycle	3 rd cycle		
1.	University of East Sarajevo	15	45	32	-	77	Ministry of Education of RS
2.	University of Sarajevo	23	102	205	25	332	HEI
3.	University of Bihać	7	37	27	-	64	Ministry of US Canton
4.	University of Mostar	11	62	71	10	143	HEI
5.	University of Zenica	8	28	30	-	58	Ministry of ZE-DO Canton
6.	University of Banja Luka	16	54	35	1	90	Ministry of Education of RS
7.	"Džemal Bijedić" University of Mostar	8	36	14	-	50	HEI
8.	University of Tuzla	16	53	40	-	93	HEI
9.	College of Hotel Managment and Tourism Trebinje	-	1	-	-	1	Ministry of Education of RS
10.	Medical College Prijedor	-	4	-	-	4	Ministry of Education of RS
11.	University for Business Studies Banja Luka	7	12	2	-	14	Ministry of Education of RS
12.	University for Business Engineering and Management Banja Luka	5	9	-	-	9	Ministry of Education of RS
13.	Independent University Banja Luka	6	16	4	-	20	Ministry of Education of RS
14.	PanEuropean University "Apeiron" Banja Luka	6	16	4	-	20	Ministry of Education of RS
15.	University "Vitez" Travnik	4	17	8	-	25	HEI
16.	University of Travnik	5	35	18	-	53	HEI
17.	University Sarajevo School of Science and Technology	5	9	5	5	19	HEI
18.	International University of Sarajevo	3	12	12	12	36	HEI

No	HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION	Faculties	Number of study programmes			Study programs in total	Data source
			1 st cycle	2 nd cycle	3 rd cycle		
19.	International Burch University, Sarajevo	3	6	5	4	15	HEI
20.	“Slobomir P University” Bijeljina	6	9	6	-	15	Ministry of Education of RS
21.	American University in BH, Tuzla	3	14	9	4	27	HEI
22.	University “Sinergija“, Bijeljina	5	10	4	-	14	Ministry of Education of RS
23.	Faculty for Public dministration, Sarajevo	0	1	-	-	1	HEI
24.	Banja Luka College, Banja Luka	0	8	-	-	8	Ministry of Education of RS
25.	College for applied and legal sciences “Prometej”, BL	0	1	-	-	1	Ministry of Education of RS
26.	College of Business Management “Primus” Gradiška	0	4	-	-	4	Ministry of Education of RS
27.	College of Service Operations Sokolac	0	8	-	-	8	Ministry of Education of RS
28.	College of Health Care, Bijeljina	0	3	-	-	3	Ministry of Education of RS
29.	College of Communications “KAPA FI”, Banja uka	0	3	-	-	3	Ministry of Education of RS
30.	College of Industry and Business Management Bosanska Krupa	0	9	-	-	9	Ministry of US Canton
31.	College of Economy and Informatics Prijedor	0	5	-	-	5	Ministry of Education of RS
32.	College of International Law, Banja Luka	0	1	-	-	1	Ministry of Education of RS
33.	Hercegovina University, Čitluk	3	10	13	-	23	HEI
34.	International University of Travnik	4	13	13	-	26	HEI
35.	Faculty of International Finances and Banking, Sarajevo	0	2	-	-	2	HEI

No	HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION	Faculties	Number of study programmes			Study programs in total	Data source
			1 st cycle	2 nd cycle	3 rd cycle		
36.	Centre for Business Studies College, Kiseljak	0	2	-	-	2	HEI
37.	College of Business, Doboj	0	3	-	-	3	Ministry of Education of RS
38.	College “Dositej” Trn, Laktaši	0	1	-	-	1	Ministry of Education of RS
39.	College “Logos centar”, Mostar	0	5	-	-	5	Ministry of HNC
40.	College for Cosmetology and Aesthetics, Banja Luka	0	1	-	-	1	Ministry of Education of RS
41.	International University of Brčko District BH	7	18	18	18	54	Department for Education of the BD of BH
42.	College of Computer Sciences and Business Communications	0	2	-	-	2	Department for Education of the BD of BH
43.	European University of the Brčko District of BH	6	21	21	7	49	Department for Education of the BD of BH
TOTAL:		182	708	595	86	1390	

APPENDIX 2:
EXCERPT FROM THE FRAMEWORK LAW ON
HIGHER EDUCATION IN BOSNIA AND
HERZEGOVINA RELATED TO THE AGENCY

4. Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance

Article 47

Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance (hereinafter: the Agency) shall be established by this Law.

The Agency is an autonomous administrative organisation.

Article 48

The Agency shall be competent to :

- set clear, transparent and accessible criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions and adoption of norms setting minimum standards in the field of higher education,
- determine criteria for selection of domestic and international experts to provide assessment and conduct quality reviews and give recommendation on accreditation of higher education institutions,
- give recommendations on criteria and standards to the ministry of Republika Srpska, cantonal ministries and the Brcko District BiH, for establishment or termination of higher education institutions and for restructuring of programmes of study,
- give recommendations on criteria for licensing of higher education institutions and programmes of study,
- give recommendations on the lowest fees for all students at higher education institutions, aiming at securing that the lowest fees are harmonised throughout BiH;
- give recommendation to the ministry of Republika Srpska, cantonal ministries and the Brcko District BiH, on work and development policy;
- provide advice and information on issues within its competence to all parties concerned,
- set quality standards, quality analyses, give recommendations for removal of shortcomings in the quality of studies and higher education institutions,
- represent Bosnia and Herzegovina in international organisations for quality in higher education,
- propose general guidelines and criteria based on which funds from the budget of the institutions of BiH may be allocated to higher education institutions for the purpose of scientific research.
- adopt of rules and other regulations within its jurisdiction.

4.1 Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions

Article 49

In the area of accreditation, the Agency shall be competent for:

- publishing a public competition for election of domestic and international experts for quality assessment and audit and giving recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions, i.e. their programmes of study (hereinafter: the experts),
- establishing committees for determining a list of experts who meet the criteria referred

to in Article 48, subparagraph 2, of this Law: the committee shall have five members, of whom one is a representative of the Rectors' Conference, one cantonal ministry, the ministry of Republika Srpska, the Brcko District BiH, and one representative of the Agency,

- submission of the set list of experts for adoption by all the ministries of education in BiH and the competent department of the Brcko District BiH,
- appointment of a committee of experts, on the basis of a proposal by the competent education authorities in relation to selection of experts from the set list of experts,
- giving recommendations to competent education authorities on accreditation of a higher education institution, i.e. a programme of study, on the basis of the opinion of the committee of experts,
- procedure and decision on accreditation and licensing of higher education institutions issued by the ministry of Republika Srpska, cantonal ministries and the Brcko District BiH, in compliance with Article 48, subparagraph 1, of this Law,
- assessment of harmonisation of decisions on accreditation with norms and criteria set by article 48, subparagraph 1, of this Law and, in case of lack of harmonisation found, giving recommendation to the Governing Board to take further measures, up to the measure of annulling the accreditation decision; such a decision on annulment of an accreditation decision may be appealed by the competent education authorities before the Governing Board of the Agency,
- maintaining a state register of accredited higher education institutions,
- permanent access, through its web site, to a list of accredited higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its publication in the Official Gazette of BiH no less than once per year, and no less than twice per year in three widely distributed daily newspapers.

4.2 Format and General Content of Diploma and Diploma Supplement

Article 50

The Agency shall issue an instruction on the format and general content of Diploma and Diploma Supplement issued by accredited higher education institutions.

4.3 Statute and Bodies of the Agency

Article 51

The work of the Agency shall be regulated by its statute.

The Council of Ministers shall give agreement to the statute of the licensing and accreditation agency.

The Agency for Development of Higher Education shall be managed by a director.

The director and his/her deputies shall be appointed by the Council of Ministers of BiH, following a public competition procedure.

The term of office of the director and his deputies is four years.

The director and deputy directors may not be from the same constituent people.

The Agency shall be governed by a Governing Board, comprising ten (10) members.

The Governing Board shall comprise three members from each constituent people, and one representing others.

Members of the Governing Board of the Agency shall be elected by the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH for a term of office of three years, with a possibility of re-election, provided that initial appointment is in stages, so that each year only one third of the members comes up for election or re-election.

The Governing Board shall decide by majority vote of the total number of members, provided that such a majority includes at least two thirds of votes by representatives of each constituent people.

The Governing Board shall comprise no less than 50% full university professors.

4.4 Financing of the Agency

Article 52

The Agency shall be financed from the budget of the institutions of BiH.

**APPENDIX 3:
CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION OF HIGHER
EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN BOSNIA AND
HERZEGOVINA**

(Related mainly to the Standards 2.1, 2.3 and 3.7)

Pursuant to Article 61 of the Law on Administration (Official Gazette of BiH 32/02 and 102/09), Article 48, indent 1) of the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, (Official Gazette of BiH 57/07 and 57/09), with regard to Article 1 and 3 of the Decision on Adoption of Documents Required for Further Implementation of the Bologna Process in BiH (Official Gazette of BiH 13/08), of Article 6 and 12 of the Statute of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance (Official Gazette of BiH 86/09), the director of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance with the consent of the Steering Board of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance of BiH granted at the 10th Session, held on 12 July 2010, adopted the following

DECISION
ON
CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTIONS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Article 1
(Subject of the Decision)

This Decision, in accordance with Article 48 indent 1) of the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereinafter: the Law), establishes the Criteria for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Article 2
(Criteria)

Criteria for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina are as follows:

a) development and strategy of higher education institution;

- 1) higher education institution develops its strategy in the process of public consultation with all the stakeholders, adopts it formally and makes it publicly available,
- 2) with its strategy, higher education institution defines its vision and mission, strategic goals and relevant plans and activities for each strategic goal,
- 3) higher education institution has an effective system and procedures for monitoring the fulfilment of its plans and realisation of its strategic goals.

b) management, internal quality assurance and quality culture;

- 1) higher education institution has an effective organisational and managerial structure that are formalised in its legal acts,
- 2) higher education institution promotes quality culture, develops a comprehensive and efficient internal quality assurance system for improving teaching, scientific research and processes of management and administration,
- 3) policy and procedures for internal quality assurance are defined in a formally adopted act,
- 4) higher education institution has a formal quality assurance body whose role, responsibilities and activities are clearly defined in its legal acts,
- 5) the role of students of the three cycles within the higher education institution management and internal quality assurance system is clearly and institutionally defined.

c) procedures for quality assurance of study programmes;

- 1) procedures for proposing, adopting, monitoring and implementing the programmes of study are established and applied for each programme of study,
- 2) procedures notably regulate: the title and aims of the study programme; learning outcomes expressed for the overall qualification and for each subject; conditions for enrolment into the programme of study; the type of study and method of delivery; credit value of each subject expressed in ECTS; method of grading for each subject; relevance of qualifications of the staff and the resources,
- 3) higher education institution analyses and continually strives to enhance its study programmes.

d) student assessment procedures;

- 1) higher education institution has and implements procedures that guarantee a fair, transparent and consistent assessment of students. The procedures are defined in the formal act adopted by the senate,
- 2) higher education institution continuously gathers data and analyses students' success (pass rate analysis) at the level of the study programme and the higher education institution, and takes actions in order to improve students' success.

e) human resources;

- 1) higher education institution secures a sufficient number of qualified teaching staff (professors and TAs) aimed at achieving its educational goals, establishing and supervising the academic rules and ensuring sustainability of its study programmes. At each study programme of the higher education institution, a sufficient number of teaching staff is employed full time and with full teaching load in order to ensure the quality and continuity of teaching and encourage external associates to join the academic process. Higher education institution employs a sufficient number of associates and/or scientific assistants for ensuring the continuity of the academic process and the development of its own staff,

- 2) higher education institution has a professional development policy for its teaching staff, allowing them professional and scientific enhancement,
- 3) once a year, higher education institution presents publications by its own teaching staff made in the past academic year (titles of papers with special emphasis on the relevance of the periodical or the event where they were published or presented, books published, etc.). Higher education institution has a procedure for publication of books and textbooks,
- 4) procedures for selection and promotion of the teaching staff are set in advance, they are publicly available and harmonised with the applicable legislation. Composition of the selection committee is competent in the given scientific area (fields and branches) for which the applicant seeks appointment,
- 5) higher education institution regularly analyses the age structure of the teaching staff, the ratio of its own and visiting faculty, qualifications of the teaching staff at all study programmes, particularly in highly specialised subjects,
- 6) higher education institution employs a sufficient number of administrative and support staff in order to ensure the regular execution of the institution's activities. The institution secures the training, development and evaluation of its administrative and support staff.

f) quality of physical resources;

- 1) higher education institution secures sufficient resources (lecture halls, laboratories and equipment, library resources, computers, individual and group study areas, etc.) for all staff and students enrolled, in order to secure improvements in the working environment and support efficient utilization of the resources. Adequacy of the resources for the delivery of the study programmes, functionality, age, ergonomics and availability are assessed continuously through internal evaluations,
- 2) higher education institution plans its investments so as to invest a part of its annual revenues in improving the physical resources,
- 3) higher education institution owns an adequate IT equipment to ensure quality delivery of teaching. Higher education institution provides Internet access available to all students,
- 4) higher education institution has a library equipped with an adequate number of printed or electronic library volumes and an adequate space for normal use of library services.

g) the information systems;

- 1) higher education institution gathers, analyses and utilizes information relevant for improving its activities in teaching, scientific research and business-administration,
- 2) higher education institution has information systems that allow precise analyses of students' pass rate for each subject and exam term, academic year or programme of study, of student-teacher ratio, etc. As a minimum, the information systems are based on the following data,

- 3) data on students per programmes of study, cycles, years, age and sex structure, periods of study, percentage of completion, success rate, etc.,
- 4) data on teaching staff (publications, engagement by subjects, sex and age structure, appointments to specific teaching/scientific titles, etc.).

h) public information;

- 1) higher education institution regularly publishes impartial, objective and publicly verifiable information on all the programmes and degrees it offers, at least on its website, in one of the languages of the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in English,
- 2) higher education institution defines its public communication policy and develops its communication strategy used for defining its target groups (students, graduates, the environment, governments and authorities, the NGO sector, the business community, the social sector), types of communication with each target group, as well as institutional public relations,
- 3) each year before enrolment, higher education institution secures a publication of a guide for future students.

i) international relations;

- 1) higher education institution has developed forms of international cooperation through European (international) projects, bilateral agreements, joint programmes, etc.,
- 2) higher education institution promotes and secures international mobility of students and teachers, following up on the application of experiences thus acquired in its own activities,
- 3) higher education institution has procedures in place and secures resources to support its international activities.

Article 3
(Entry into force)

This decision shall enter into force on the day of its adoption and shall be published in the Official Gazette of BiH.

No. 01-50-633-11/10
12 July 2010
Banja Luka

Director
Prof **Nihad Fejzić**, PhD, m.p.

APPENDIX 4:
DECISION ON NORMS FOR DETERMINING MINIMUM
STANDARDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN BOSNIA AND
HERZEGOVINA

(Related mainly to the Standards 2.1, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7 and 3.7)

Pursuant to Article 16 of the Law on Administration (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina 32/02 and 102/09), Article 48 indent 1 of the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina 59/07 and 59/09), Article 6 and Article 12 of the Statute of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina 86/09), the acting director of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance with the agreement of the Steering Board of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance, at the 14th meeting held on 24 October issues the

DECISION
ON NORMS FOR DETERMINING MINIMUM STANDARDS IN HIGHER
EDUCATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

I

This decision lays down the norms for determining minimum standards in higher education contained in the Rules for attaining standards and guidelines for quality assurance in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

II

Rules for attaining standards and guidelines for quality assurance in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina are an integral part of this decision.

III

This decision shall enter into force on the eighth day following its publication in the Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Number: 06-331-241-15/11

ACTING DIRECTOR

Date: 4 November 2011

Boris Ćurković, m.p.

RULES FOR ATTAINING STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Definitions used in these Rules shall have the following meaning:

- a) *Accreditation* is a process of external review and quality assessment by which higher education institution is recognised as having met the established standards and criteria in its work;
- b) *Criterion* is a quantitative or qualitative basis by which compliance with a standard is being judged;
- c) *Standard* is a statement of principles and the expected level of requirements against which quality is assessed that must be attained by higher education institution and/or study programme;
- d) *Self-evaluation (self-assessment)* is a process representing an effective mechanism and procedures of a higher education institution by which compliance with the pre-defined quality standards and criteria is determined, monitored and controlled on a cyclical basis for the purpose of enhancing the quality assurance system and the overall academic development;
- e) *External evaluation (external assessment)* is an objective and impartial evaluation carried out by the panel of experts who conduct quality assessment and review and provide recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and/or study programmes;
- f) *Expert* is a member of the Panel from the list of experts, established under Article 49 of the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- g) *Panel of experts* is an independent body in charge of conducting quality review in a systematic, objective and documented manner, passing judgement about the compliance with pre-defined standards and criteria and making recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes;
- h) *Conflict of interest* occurs in the situation when a member of the Panel of experts is involved in a certain professional or private financial interest in the higher education institution under review, which can affect his or her impartial and objective discharge of Panel duties. Conflict of interest refers particularly to a situation in which the proposed member of the Panel is involved in professional or private financial interest in the higher education institution under review, in the current and the following academic year in relation to the year of external evaluation, including also members of his or her close family (parents, spouses and children).

1. Rules for attaining standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance

1.1 Development and strategy, and organisation of higher education institution and internal quality assurance system¹

Higher education institution should have in place system of strategic planning, based on a strategy which has a formal status and is publicly available. In developing its strategy, higher education institution should consult its stakeholders such as: teaching and non-teaching staff, students, founder, government and non-government sector, local community, key business entities, employers and other relevant partners. The strategy of higher education institution, defining at the least the mission, vision and strategic goals, should be published on its web site and elsewhere. Higher education institution should also have clear procedures for developing accurate plans and activities to define responsibilities, deadlines and resources required for implementation of the activities that higher education institution intends to achieve. Higher education institution should periodically update its strategic goals and plans, by defining new goals and developing new plans.

Higher education institution should have an organisation and integration of functions that allow efficient use of resources. Higher education institution should have clearly defined policy and procedures for development of internal quality assurance system.

Students should be given the opportunity to have an impact on the decision-making and the process of addressing issues that concern them. Therefore, higher education institution should regularly organise ballots to ensure a democratic representation of students in the governing bodies and to make sure that students' representatives participate as full members in the work of academic and governing structures and quality assurance body.

Procedures for internal quality assurance should clearly define the manner of execution, control and analysis of key processes on higher education institution. Higher education institution should establish a formal quality assurance body and/or officials (the Quality committee, Department for quality, Quality Administrator, Quality Manager, etc) responsible for implementation of quality assurance policy and procedures. Thereby, higher education institution should undertake activities to ensure effective operations of the body and/or officials involved in the internal quality system, full integrity of their work and free access to all relevant information and processes (teaching, research and administrative and management process). Reports, analyses and recommendations of quality assurance body and/or officials should be regularly reviewed within the bodies of higher education institution (research and education councils, senates, student organisations and the steering board).

¹ In the accreditation process the attainment of standard 1.1 is judged against the fulfillment of criterion 1. Development and strategy of higher education institution and criterion 2. Organisation of higher education institution and system of internal quality assurance.

Higher education institution should regularly and in an organised manner survey students' opinions on the quality of teaching (e.g. student surveys) allowing students to express their opinions freely and anonymously. The resulting opinions of students should contribute to the processes and be considered when the necessary measures are taken.

1.2 Monitoring and periodic review of study programmes

Higher education institution should have formally established procedures so as to approve and continually monitor the study programme delivery, periodically conduct study programme review and, when necessary, propose new study programmes. Procedures should entail involvement of subject teachers, labour market, professional associations and students. Programmes at higher education institutions should be designed by using a uniform template. Student learning outcomes should be provided at the level of study programme as well as other level. Method of ECTS credit allocation should ensure the proper assessment of the student workload. Written analysis of study programme, which is regularly considered by relevant bodies of higher education institution, should be carried out by the institution's departments in consultation with the quality assurance body.

1.3 Student assessment

Higher education institution should have clearly defined and transparent procedures for student assessment and in place mechanisms for a consistent application and evaluation of effectiveness of the established assessment procedures. Procedures for student assessment should regulate a continuous monitoring and assessment of student progress throughout semester for each subject, the possibility for students to view their exam papers, examination answer keys and solutions after the final grading, student appeals procedures and a possibility to take an exam before an independent commission. Minimum amount of knowledge, skills and competences acquired by a student should be clearly defined by the grading scale, and exam schedules specifying time, location and name of the examiner should be set at the beginning of the semester and be published. Organisation method for the assessment of knowledge, competences and skills of students, transparency of methods and grading criteria and students' rights should be formally established.

Teachers of a study programme should ensure that student assessment is in line with the defined learning outcomes and that the whole spectrum of knowledge is being assessed in accordance with the level of qualification. After each exam term, and at least at the end of each semester, research and education councils should analyse student success rates, and at the end of each semester the senate should examine and consider the analysis of student success rates at the level of higher education institution. Analyses cover statistical data (number of students who took the exam, number of students who passed the exam, average grade, number of students meeting the criteria to progress to the next year of study, etc.) and students' opinions on teaching, collected through student surveys. On the basis of such analyses, measures and recommendations should be adopted with an aim to improve the

processes of examination and teaching. Special attention is given to those subjects where particularly low or particularly high success rates or average grades are noted.

1.4 Human resources

Higher education institution should satisfy itself that teaching is performed by qualified and competent teaching staff. A programme for teaching and administrative staff development, with appropriate resources allocated to it, should be a priority. The total number of teaching staff per study programme should be in line with standards and norms established by education authorities, according to the teaching load norms for teachers and total teaching load for each study programme. Higher education institution should formally establish and develop criteria for election to scientific-teaching and artistic-teaching titles.

Procedures for election of teaching staff should be based on a public and open procedure, they should contain the dynamics of the public announcements for the election, deadlines, method of evaluation of scientific, artistic or teaching achievements, composition of the election committee and the appeals procedures. When assessing the teaching achievements, the higher education institution may also take into account the student evaluations. Assignment of teaching to the academic staff is done only according to their competences, on the basis of their election to a particular scientific or teaching title, and under a set classification of teaching areas (affiliation of subjects with chairs, scientific fields and areas). Academic staff teaching a particular subject should have published works in that subject area.

In study programmes largely relying on external staff (visiting teachers), higher education institution should employ a sufficient number of teaching assistants to promote adequate inclusion of external staff in teaching, continuous availability of academic staff to students and development of its own staff in the given area. Higher education institution should allocate funds for scientific, professional and pedagogical development of its academic staff (participation in projects, scientific conferences, professional trainings, etc), and support its staff to publish their research papers, whereby acknowledged and widely recognised publications should be preferred.

Higher education institution should keep records of professional and research papers, scientific projects and books published by its staff, and they should be made publicly available on the web site for each member of the academic staff. Moreover, higher education institutions should review publications according to classification and indexing status of journals, statistics per each organisational unit, the ratio between the number of papers and the funds allocated, etc.

1.5 Quality of physical resources

In supporting teaching activities and students higher education institution should have adequate material and technical resources, regularly review the effectiveness of their utilisation, conduct opinion surveys of staff and students on their availability and

effectiveness, and draw up resources investment plan to improve its performance. The amount of resources in relation to the number of students should correspond to the standards and norms adopted by the relevant education authorities.

Higher education institution should evaluate the effectiveness of utilisation of its physical resources by comparing the amount of resources with the number of students and by collecting and analysing opinions of students and the staff on the amount and adequacy of the resources and of their contribution to student learning. Higher education institution should have a clear investment plan and allocate funds to improve physical infrastructure and provide support to student learning.

Higher education institution should have adequate hardware and software necessary for the achievement of learning goals in different study programmes (professional software such as engineering, statistical or simulation software, etc). Higher education institution should provide students with Internet access in its premises, either by supplying the library with computers or by providing wireless access for students' personal computers. Higher education institution should provide reference materials and premises needed for the student learning.

Libraries in higher education institutions should be supplied with a sufficient number of compulsory reading copies for each subject at each study programme. Library should also be supplied with textbooks authored by the teaching staff of higher education institution in a large number of copies, sufficient for at least one half of students of the academic year where such a textbook is a compulsory reading.

1.6 Information systems

Higher education institution should have in place information system for collection, analysis and use of information relevant for the efficient management. Higher education institution should have developed data collection systems for the provision of systematic information on: teaching, student success rate, student employability, learning resources, research resources, publications by its own staff, financial data, etc. Higher education institution should collect data by using uniform templates designed to allow rapid data analyses. Higher education institution should have uniform software installed in each organisational unit which contains students database and is run by student services office, and is also used for teachers to enter grades. Software should allow for different search options and quick production of statistical data. Higher education institution should also have an electronic database used for entering data related to teachers, their advancement, publications and coverage of teaching for each year of study.

1.7 Public information

Higher education should regularly make public updated, impartial and objective information on all programmes and cycles, awards offered, teaching, learning and knowledge assessment. Information presented to future students to help them choose their own studies should be

accurate, impartial, objective and readily accessible and should not be used simply as a marketing opportunity. Higher education institution should have a web site containing all the information of interest (such as study programmes, teachers' names, schedule of lectures, research, etc) for future and current students, academic and non-academic staff and general public. Web sites should be in one of the official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and at least 50% of the total web content should be in English, as well. Higher education institution should prepare an information package as a useful tool for future students and for ECTS exchange, containing all the relevant data on study programmes, including the curriculum with the number of ECTS credits allocated to each subject or module. The information package should be available in two languages (in one of the official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in English). Higher education institution should communicate in an organised manner with its environment, notably with its stakeholders: representatives of the labour market, social partners and the community. Higher education institution should actively support the establishment of alumni associations (by organising events for them), and collect data, in an organised manner, on employment destinations of its former students which are made publicly available, on its web site, at the least.

International relations²

Higher education institution should have resources and developed procedures for establishing various forms of international cooperation that are to be complied with mission, vision and priorities of higher education institutions. In that way, higher education institution such as a university, should have an organised service for international cooperation, through which it establishes relations with higher education institutions operating abroad, organises student exchanges, joint projects, etc. Higher education institution should have concluded cooperation agreements with higher education institutions abroad. These agreements should be active, on the basis of which joint activities are undertaken. Higher education institutions may establish international cooperation through agreements with universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Higher education institution should participate in the international projects. In line with international context of study programmes, students have the opportunity to complete a part of their programmes abroad. Higher education institution should promote international mobility of its teaching staff. In its procedures, higher education institution may establish benefits in order to promote international relevance (awards for papers published abroad, stimulation for teachers visiting foreign universities, stimulation for students' international activities, etc).

² Although international relations are not covered as a separate standard in the Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the accreditation process its attainment shall be assessed against the fulfillment of the criterion 9.

2. Rules for attaining standards and guidelines for external quality assurance

Purpose and participants in the external quality assurance: External quality assurance serves the purpose of accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes and the purpose of their improvement. Participants in the external quality assurance are:

- higher education institution,
- relevant higher education authority,
- the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance (hereinafter referred to as: the Agency),
- Panel of domestic and international experts who provide assessment and conduct quality review and give recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes (hereinafter referred to as: the Panel).

Self-evaluation and use of internal quality assurance results: Higher education institution should conduct a self-evaluation process on a cyclical basis. For the purpose of the self-evaluation higher education institution should appoint a team made up of the representatives of the institution's units and targeted groups (academic and administrative staff, students, etc). The backbone for the external quality assurance is the Report on the attainment of standards and criteria for accreditation or the Self-evaluation report, which should be approved by the relevant body of the higher education institution. The self-evaluation report should be produced in one of the official languages in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in English language, and its structure is expected to include at least the following parts:

1. *Introduction*
 - 1.1. History and organisation of higher education institution
 - 1.2. Implementation of the Bologna Process at higher education institution
 - 1.3. Research and scientific-research and/or artistic work
 - 1.4. Relations with the environment, economy and social partners
 - 1.5. Financial resources of higher education institution
 - 1.6. Statistical data
2. *Self-evaluation process*
 - 2.1. Self-evaluation team
 - 2.2. Self-evaluation procedures
3. *Standards and criteria*
 - 3.1. Development and strategy of higher education institution
 - 3.2. Management, internal quality assurance and quality culture
 - 3.3. Procedures for quality assurance of study programmes
 - 3.4. Student assessment procedures
 - 3.5. Human resources
 - 3.6. Quality of physical resources
 - 3.7. Information systems
 - 3.8. Public information
 - 3.9. International relations

4. *Conclusions with suggested activities for improvement*
5. *Appendices*

Method and areas of external quality assurance: External quality assurance processes should be structured in a 4-steps model, which includes:

- a self-evaluation report drafted by higher education institution,
- a site visit by the Panel to higher education institution,
- external review report published by the relevant education authorities, and
- follow-up activities undertaken by higher education institution to address the recommendations of the Panel outlined in the external evaluation report.

External quality assurance should explicitly make evident the attainment of Standards for internal quality assurance and fulfillment of criteria for accreditation, by applying these Rules. It should also verify the state-of-affairs presented in the Report of higher education institution against the facts determined during the site visit of the Panel to the higher education institution.

Organisation of external quality assurance: External quality assurance should be organised in such way that the decisions on quality are taken independently from education authorities, political structures and higher education institution under the external review, avoiding thereby any conflict of interest. In this respect, each participant of the process should have a clearly defined responsibility specified in formal regulation of a higher education authority (ordinance on the accreditation procedure or other appropriate regulation), which is expected to include, at least, the following:

- manner of and deadlines for submitting the request for accreditation by higher education institution,
- required documentation to complement the request,
- manner and deadlines for appointment of the Panel of experts,
- specified period for conducting assessment and review of the quality of higher education institution's performance,
- manner in which report is delivered to the Agency for the provision of recommendations referred to in Article 49 indent 5 of the Framework Law on Higher Education (e.g. delivery deadline in accordance with relevant regulations governing the administrative procedure and other parameters related to the legal security of the participants).

Panel of experts: Proposed, i.e. appointed experts in the Panel should be selected from the list of experts, established under the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Panel should comprise a minimum of each of the four categories of experts: representative of the academic community, representative of economy and practice, an international expert and a student. The Panel has a chairperson, typically selected from the representatives of the academic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Recommendation on the working method of the Panel: All the decisions of the Panel are typically made by consensus, and in an event when the consensus is not reached, each Panel member can pass his or her opinion. The Panel shall assess compliance with each criterion descriptively by applying the following terms:

- full compliance,
- substantial compliance,
- partial compliance,
- non-compliance.

Report of the Panel: Report of the Panel should be written in a style, which is clear and intelligible, in one of the official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as in English, and its structure should, at least, contain the following:

- introduction with basic information regarding higher education institution and organisation units, composition of the Panel, the period of the assessment and review,
- short overview of the Panel work,
- analysis of and opinion on the application of standards for internal quality assurance and descriptive grade of compliance with each criterion for accreditation,
- recommendations for quality enhancement,
- opinion on the accreditation outcome, as follows:
 - a. accreditation granted to higher education institution or study programme only then when all criteria are judged as being in full or substantial compliance,
 - b. conditional accreditation or issuance of a letter of expectation in an event when more than one half of the criteria is fully or substantially complied with, and the remaining are partially complied with, and
 - c. issuance of the decision on accreditation being denied in an event when at least one criterion has not been met or when more than one half of the criteria is partially complied with.

Higher education institution shall publish the report of the Panel on its web site upon the completion of the accreditation process, and so shall the Agency on its web site.

Recommendation on the follow-up activities: Upon receiving the formal decision on accreditation higher education institution shall draw up an action plan with follow-up activities to be undertaken specifying the timeframe and persons in charge of the implementation of recommendations for internal quality improvement from the Panel report. The action plan shall be published on its web site. Higher education institution should produce a report once a year on activities that have been carried out to implement the action plan. The report should contain the undertaken activities, the extent to which the implementation has been carried out, as well as indication of deviations from the action plan, if any, explaining

the circumstances within which these deviations occurred. The report on follow-up activities should be published by the higher education institution on its web site.

Periodic external quality assurance: External quality assurance of higher education institutions should be undertaken at a specified time interval regulated by respective regulations, considering that external quality assurance is an ongoing process. Every subsequent process of quality assurance should take due account of progress achieved after the previous process.

Prijevod: Agencija za razvoj visokog obrazovanja i osiguranje kvalitete

**APPENDIX 5:
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2011**

BOSNA I HERCEGOVINA
Agencija za razvoj visokog
obrazovanja i osiguranje
kvaliteta/kvalitete
Banja Luka



БОСНА И ХЕРЦЕГОВИНА
Агенција за развој високог
образовања и обезбјеђивање
квалитета
Бања Лука

Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance

Annual Report of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance for the 2011

Banjaluka, March 2012

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1.INTRODUCTION

In the reporting period, activities of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance (hereinafter: the Agency) in 2011 were carried out in accordance with the Agency's Programme of Work for 2011 which was adopted at the 13th meeting of the Agency's Steering Board, held on 11 April 2010, after which the Programme was forwarded to the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and adopted at the 152nd meeting, held on 1 June 2011.

In exercising its competences provided for by the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina ("Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina 59/07 and 59/09"), the Agency has finished the preliminary draft and conducted public consultation on *Recommendations on criteria and standards to the Ministry of Republic of Srpska, cantonal ministries and Brčko District for establishment and closure of higher education institutions and the re-structuring of study programmes*, and *Recommendations on criteria for the licensing of higher education institutions and study programmes*, that were submitted to the Steering Board of the Agency for approval. In exercising competences pertaining to quality assurance in higher education, the main activities in the reporting period were the drafting of and public consultation on the following three documents: *Decision on norms determining minimum standards in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (adopted on 4 November 2011 and published in the "Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina 100/11"), *Rulebook on keeping the national register of accredited higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (adopted on 28 October 2011 and published in the "Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina 91/11") and *Instruction for reviewing the compliance of decision on accreditation with the minimum standards in higher education and criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (adopted on 4 November 2011 and published on the web site of the Agency). Having adopted these documents the Agency completed the legislative framework for accreditation from its scope of authority. In three out of five of these documents there has been a deviation from the Programme of work for 2011 with regard to the form of the documents in order to achieve larger compliance with the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereinafter referred to as: the Framework law). Internationally, the Agency continued to build on well-established relationships with the European and international organisations for quality assurance in higher education. Also, the Agency continued to strengthen cooperation with counterpart agencies in the region and beyond. The Agency is involved in a number of international projects in this area. International standing of the Agency has been bolstered through the election of its representative into the executive body of the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA), and its participation in the expert group of the European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQA) for revision of the Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

In the reporting period, the Agency operated under difficult circumstances which affected the dynamics of its activities. Due to the restricted budget, the Agency was forced to suspend its

activities on strengthening human resources in terms of reaching the number of employees envisaged by the job systematisation (job classification). The number of employees in 2011 was even reduced (on 1 January 2011 the Agency had 24 employees, and on 31 December 2011 the number of employees was 18). Owing to the sluggish implementation of the results of the General elections, held on 15 December 2010, in 2011 the Conference of ministers of education of Bosnia and Herzegovina was not held, which serves as the platform for coordination of education policies between constitutionally competent entities, cantons and Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, at midyear the director of the Agency submitted his resignation and it was not until the end of the year that the Agency had a new director. However, despite the aggravated external conditions, the Agency managed to meet the bulk of its primary goals defined in the Programme of work for 2011, seeing through all of its legislative requirements in the scope of its authority (stipulated in Article 48, 49 and 50 of the Framework law).

1.1. Background

According to the data provided by the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina¹, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 2011, there were 124 036 students pursuing their degrees in 37 higher education institutions. According to the Framework law, higher education institutions are universities and colleges². Eight public universities and two public colleges account for the largest number of students. Besides the 10 public HEIs, there are 14 private universities and 13 private colleges operating in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is estimated that 10% – 15 % of students study at private higher education institutions. According to the data the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance collected from both official and public sources, in the current academic year there are 620 study programmes of the first cycle, 427 study programmes of the second cycle and 61 doctoral degrees being offered at 37 higher education institutions. In 2010 (data for 2011 not yet available) 18 177 students obtained their bachelor's degree (completed the first cycle of study), 1 298 students obtained their master's degree and the Master of science degree, and 205 PhD students received their doctoral degrees. In Bosnia and Herzegovina there are totally 8 643³ teachers and external associates employed in higher education institutions. Under the BH Constitution, the responsibility for all levels of education lies with entities, and in the Federation of BH entity it comes under the competence of cantons. Under the Constitution, there is no single authority at the state level to deal with (higher) education, hence all activities, according to the Framework law, are oriented toward coordination, harmonisation and implementation of the European higher education reforms following the Bologna principles.

¹ Communiqué of the Agency for Statistics of BiH, No. 2, year 6, 25 October 2011

² Universities provide all three cycles of higher education, offering at least 5 programmes of study in three different fields of science, whereas colleges provide education only at undergraduate (first cycle) level (Article 10 of the Framework Law).

³ The Agency for Statistics of B&H: "Given that teachers and external associates can teach at two or more higher education institutions, the given number as full-time equivalent is merely an approximation."

The Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance was established under the Article 47 of the Framework law as an independent governing organisation. The head office of the Agency in Banjaluka and the date of its formal launch, 1 March 2008, were established by the decision of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina ("Official Gazette of BH" No. 10/08). The Agency has been fully operational since 1 December 2008. Scope of work and responsibilities of the Agency are defined in Articles 47 to 52 of the Framework law. More generally, the scope of the Agency entails fulfillment of a part of obligations that Bosnia and Herzegovina has committed to by joining the Bologna Process. In exercising its statutory responsibilities, in the recent period the Agency has issued the Manual for the model and content of diploma and diploma supplement issued by higher education institutions ("Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina" No. 86/09) – Article 50 of the Framework law, and documents required for creating the list of national and international experts who conduct quality assessment and review and give recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions (Article 48 of the Framework law). Furthermore, the Agency launched a public competition procedure to establish the list of national and international experts who conduct quality assessment and review and give recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions, resulting in the list of 334 experts that was established under the Article 49 of the Framework law. The list was adopted by all education ministries in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the competent body of the Brčko District. The Agency also issued the Decision on criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina ("Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina" No. 75/10). The Agency is a full member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education - INQAAHE, Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education - CEENQA, and an associate member of the European Association for Quality Assurance - ENQA.

2. INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING AND MANAGEMENT

As the institutional strengthening of the Agency is seen as continuous process of utmost importance for a successful discharge of duties from the scope of authority of the Agency, in the reporting period the activities have continued on the improvement of organisational, technical and other conditions relevant for the functioning of the Agency. In the reporting period, organisation and management of the Agency were being constantly upgraded through analyses and update of management procedures. In order to streamline and computerise the system of records and archives management in the Agency, the document management system was installed (eDMS project). It is used for the management of workflow and procedures by keeping track of business documents and files in the electronic form. This project, whose testing and production phase is in the upcoming period, will be used to enhance the efficiency of information technology at strategic level, internal and external cooperation, by connecting people, processes and information in a transparent way. In the reporting period, all activities were carried out in terms of establishment of IT network and servers, and installation of IP telephony. All these, along with the continuous update of the web site, had a positive effect on horizontal and vertical communication in the Agency, contributing thereby to a better performance.

The Agency failed to finalise and formalise the internal quality assurance system, although there has been progress in this area in the reporting period. Owing to the aforementioned external constraints, the Agency did not meet the envisaged programme goal of making the mid-term Strategy, so this task remains to be fulfilled in 2012.

2.1 Financing

2.1.1. Budget of the Agency

As stipulated in the Decision on temporary financing of institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and international obligations of Bosnia and Herzegovina ("Official Gazette of BH" No. 2/11, 28/11, 56/11 i 85/11), and Instructions of the Ministry of Finance and Treasury of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the operating budget of the Agency for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2011 was **1 240 850.00 KM⁴**. In the period of temporary financing the amount of saved budget funds in 2010 is 108 150.00 KM, and these are made in capital funds, amounting to 70 000.00 KM and current expenditure, amounting to 38 150.00 KM.

Execution of the Agency's budget in relation to the approved funds and based on the Decision on temporary financing in the period from 1 January to 31 December 2011 is 1 137 648.00 KM or 91,68 %, with the current expenditure made in the same percentage.

2.1.2. Budget of ADA project

Unexpended funds of the project "Support to Establishment and Functioning of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance", financed by the Austrian Development Agency – ADA (Contract on non-refundable funds No.: 8073-02/2009/1-LR/2009, entered into on 2 November 2009), from 2010 amounting to 218 093.06 KM were carried over into 2011. The Austrian Development Agency disbursed the third tranche of funds in the amount of 154 510.57 KM, earmarked for the realisation of project activities in line with the Project Document. Execution of total budget of the Project, in the amount of 372 603.63 KM, based on the analysis of available funds from FIMS system (Financial Information Management System) of the Ministry of Finance and Treasury of Bosnia and Herzegovina as at 31 December 2011 is 337 865.00 KM or 90,68%.

2.1.3. Budget in total

Total funds available to the Agency for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2011 amount to **1 613 453.63 KM**, of which the budget funds are 1 240 850.00 KM, and the

⁴ Exchange rate: 1KM = 0,51129 EUR, or 1 EUR = 1.95585 KM

donor's funds 372 603.63 KM. The Agency spent 1 475 512.00 KM on its activities or 91,45% of the funds that were placed at its disposal. Execution of the budget for capital expenditure in the amount of 133 455.00 KM pertains only to donor's funds which is in line with the Decision on temporary financing of institutions of BH and international obligations of BH ("Official Gazette of BH" No. 2/11, 28/11, 56/11 i 85/11).

Under the Law on budget of institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and international obligations of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2011 ("Official Gazette of BH" No. 12/12) the established budget for the Agency was in line with the budget execution in 2011 and it totalled **1 475 523.00 KM**. Of the total funds determined by law the budgetary funds amount to 1 137 656.00 KM, and the donor's funds of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) amount to 337 867.99 KM.

2.2 Public procurement

In the reporting period the Agency carried out public procurement activities in accordance with the Public procurement plan for 2011 that was elaborated on the basis of the Request for allocation of funds from the Budget for 2011 and conformed with the requirements of temporary financing, taking due account of the fact that the Budget for 2011 had not been approved within the timeframe defined by law. The Public procurement plan covers both the procurement financed from the budget funds and that financed from the funds of the project "Support to Establishment and Functioning of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance", with an aim to rationalise the cost of implementation of related procedures.

The total value of the completed public procurement activities of the Agency, according to the generated report from WisPPA system of the Agency for public procurement of BH, is 291 921.52 KM, no VAT included, as at 31 December 2011. Public procurement activities were carried out in line with the provisions of the Law on public procurement and internal by-laws by means of: open procedure, competitive request and direct agreement (Table 1 Figure 1).

No.	Type of procedure	Value in KM no VAT			Total value	Per cent (%)
		Goods	Services	Work		
1	Open procedure	49 974.36	0.00	0.00	49 974.36	17.12
2	Competitive request	51 512.45	162 630.77	0.00	214 143.22	73.36
3	Direct agreement	15 990.04	11 813.90	0.00	27 803.94	9.52
Total value		117 476.85	174 444.67	0.00	291 921.52	100.00

Table 1. Structure of public procurement by the subject of procurement and type of procedure

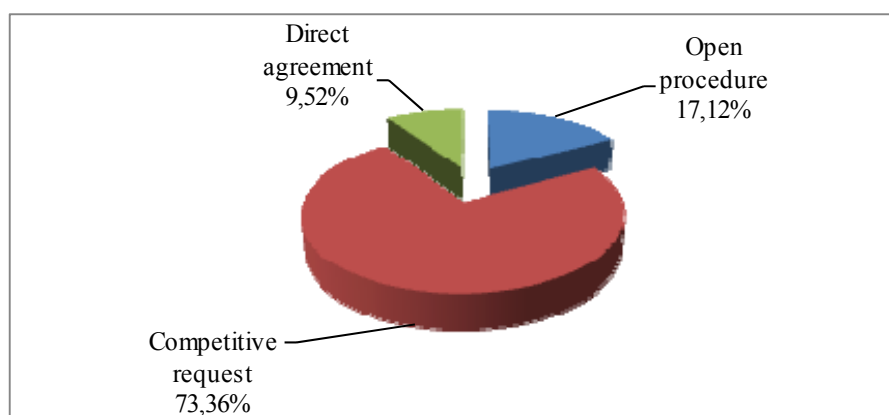


Figure 1. Structure of public procurement by procedures used

Equipment was procured from the Project funds for the purpose of implementation of the Project which is in line with the Decisions on temporary financing of institutions of BH and international obligations of BH ("Official Gazette of BH" No. 2/11, 28/11, 56/11 i 85/11).

2.3. Financial audit

Audit Office of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina has carried out reviews of the Agency's performance and financial reporting ever since its establishment. The Agency received the Financial audit report for 2010 on 22 June 2011. In the report, performance of the Agency was judged "positive with areas for improvement", and Agency was given recommendations for improvement of internal control system and a more efficient governance. In addressing the recommendations given in the report, the Agency has taken immediate actions by adopting the *Action plan for implementation of recommendations of the Audit office of the institutions of BH*, undertaken a thorough analysis of its operational processes and conducted internal control in accordance with the *Rule book on internal control*. Furthermore, the Agency drafted the *Report on the internal control and audit for the period from 1 January until 30 June 2011*. The Action plan sets out the strategic goal – to increase efficiency of the internal control system at the Agency, and sub-goals, activities, anticipated results and the deadline for implementation with accompanying remarks. Audit Office of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina conducted the previous audit for 2011 and the final one will be conducted after the final financial report has been made. In late 2011, the Agency received a "letter for the management" with recommendations for improvement from the previous audit, on the basis of which the Agency made an action plan with measures, the implementation of which is underway.

The Agency has significantly benefited from the two-way communication with the Audit Office of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina in that it improved its management procedures and increased the efficiency of spending the allocated public and donor's funds. So, for instance, the cuts have been made in expenditures for representation, postal and telephone services, and new manuals and instructions have been adopted. In accordance with

the recommendations from the Audit office, in 2011 the Agency cut back on expenditures on freelance contracts and took concrete measures that led to significantly reduced amount of contracts, dropping from 12 contracts in 2010 to 7 in 2011.

2.4. Development of human resources and organisations

By the Rule book on internal organisation of the Agency 35 job positions have been systematised. As of 31 December 2011 the total capacity in relation to the systematised number of job positions was 57.14%, that is 18, as follows: 3 appointees, 7 civil servants and 8 employees. A public competition was launched to fill two vacant positions: senior official for higher education and senior official for quality assurance. This was done in accordance with the Law on civil service in institutions of BH and the procedure is currently underway. Due to the temporary financing of BH institutions and contrary to the Programme of work for 2011, there has been no recruitment of interns and civil servants. In the area of employment affairs, 35 decisions regulating the exercise of employee's rights have been issued (annual leave, recognition of the right to monetary remuneration), and Annual leave plan for 2011 elaborated. In the reporting period, the proposal for the Amendments to the Rule book on internal organisation of the Agency was drafted referring to the re-categorisation of job positions. In cooperation with the Agency for civil service, the civil servants of the Agency underwent training seminars on a regular basis following the programme of the Agency for civil service.

Even though it had been envisaged by the Programme of work for 2011, the Agency did not manage to set up the system of assessment of employees and civil servants, despite the fact that initial policies have been made. Consequently, the promotion monitoring system was not established. Also, a register of civil servants was not established nor did integration with the central register of civil servants of the Agency for civil service take place.

2.4.1. Records and archives management

In an effort to streamline the records management activities certain steps were taken, all necessary records and files were created, and Archive register established. Also, current records were selected that have accumulated in the work of the Agency so far. The List of current records was reviewed and in the following period amendments to the List will be made in cooperation with the Archives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, since it has been found that all documents relevant to work of Agency have not been covered. In the reporting period 906 files were recorded in the registry. Also, in this period, certain progress has been made in archiving the records accumulated in the work carried out so far, as well as in delivering excerpts from the archives register of the Agency (a copy of the archives register) to the Archives of Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, this activity was not entirely completed, although it had been envisaged in the Programme of work for 2011.

2.5. Institutional communication

In the reporting period, the Agency continued its regular activities on further development and improvement of the communication system toward realisation of its key tasks. In PR sector, and in line with the Programme of work for 2011, both previously and newly initiated activities have continued relating to implementation of media campaign with the primary goal of raising awareness of the public and academic community on the importance of quality assurance in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Secondary goal of this campaign is to inform the public and academic community about the competences of the Agency, establishment of the National register of accredited higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to the Plan of communication activities the campaign covered the following areas:

- Production and broadcasting of TV ads
- Production and broadcasting of a radio jingle
- Web banner design
- Media appearances
- Printing of promotional and informative materials
- Info day with students, reporters, promotion of campaign

Planned communication activity – printing of promotional and informative material – was successfully completed in March 2011, when all ordered materials were delivered, together with leaflets in three official languages in Bosnia and Herzegovina and English. These were used for promotional purposes of the Agency during the field trip to Brussels, from 21 to 24 March, in the framework of ADA project, and in other events organised by the Agency. Also, other planned campaign activities were successfully carried out, and they are the production of a TV ad, radio jingle and web banner. In line with the Plan of communication activities the media campaign was conducted, running from 28 October until 28 November. This included broadcasting of audio and video materials on six TV stations, four radio stations and six web portals, as follows: 146 TV broadcasts, 540 radio broadcasts and 903 531 displays on web portals, and 2638 hits on Facebook. As the campaign was targeted at student population and general public as well, it is estimated that 73,82% or 1 975 000 of the target audience 18+ were exposed to advertisement at least once during the campaign, which is an outstanding indicator for a campaign of this intensity. Furthermore, guest interviews were held on the top-rating TV shows and radio stations, during which a general message to the public was sent, primarily to students, on the importance of accreditation and preference for an accredited higher education institution, and on the activities and competences of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance. Before running the broadcasts, campaign promotion had been successfully organised.

In the reporting period, the preparation of the publication of the Agency "Quality Assurance in Higher Education – European experiences and practices" was finalised. Given that properly selected and carefully devised communication activities of the Agency contribute to the promotion of the Agency, and also to the value of quality assurance in higher education in

Bosnia and Herzegovina, this publication outlines the best European experiences and practices in this area without any intention to favour of discuss models for Bosnia and Herzegovina in this field.

Also, the public was informed about the activities of the Agency that are relevant to its promotion through the following: announcement of the study visit of HEA delegation to Brussels; support to HEA given by the General Directorate for Education and Culture of the European Commission; CEENQA Assembly – another acknowledgement the Agency; director of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance in the Expert group for revision of ESG; consultation on standards for quality assurance in higher education in BH; ministries of education endorsed Standards for quality assurance in higher education in BH; policies on accreditation from the scope of authority of the Agency adopted; HEA drafted recommendations to the competent education ministries etc. Public relations activities in this period included interviews, statements, addressing media enquiries and those made by interested parties, and responding to requests for access to information made in line with the Law on freedom of access to information. Following events organised by the Agency, two conferences for reporters were held in Banjaluka and Sarajevo and they were well attended and widely reported in the media.

Information was collected and web site of the Agency updated on a regular basis. The web site of the Agency is updated in four languages on a daily basis, the official languages in Bosnia and Herzegovina and English.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Exercising its competences provided for in Article 48 of the Framework law that pertain to development of higher education, the Agency elaborated three key documents in the reporting period:

- Decision on norms for determining minimum standards in higher education (adopted on 4 November 2011 and published in the “Official Gazette of BH” No. 100/11);
- Recommendations on criteria and standards to the Ministry of Republic of Srpska, cantonal ministries and Brčko District of BH for establishment and closure of higher education institutions and re-structuring of study programmes;
- Recommendations on criteria for the licensing of higher education institutions and study programmes.

Following public consultation, Recommendations on criteria and standards to the Ministry of Republic of Srpska, cantonal ministries and Brčko District of BH for establishment and closure of higher education institutions and re-structuring of study programmes and Recommendations on criteria for the licensing of higher education institutions and study programmes were referred to the Steering Board of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance for approval.

By the Programme of work for 2011 these policies were envisaged to be made as standards (standards for internal quality assurance, standards for external quality assurance, standards for establishment and closure of higher education institutions and re-structuring of study programmes, and standards for the licensing of higher education institutions and study programmes). However, in the reporting period, the Agency looked into ways to enforce the Framework law and opted for adoption of policies under the names stipulated in Article 48 of the Framework law. This departure from the Programme of work is not to be understood as a change in its essence, it is rather a more consistent implementation of the Framework law.

Decision on norms for determining minimum standards in higher education is a document reflecting the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Bosnia and Herzegovina* („Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina“, No. 13/08), and more broadly the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (Conference of the European Ministers of Education, Bergen, 2005). This document sets out Rules for attaining standards and guidelines in two key parts: internal quality assurance and external quality assurance. The document is entirely compatible with the *Criteria on accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina* ("Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina", No. 75/10) and it defines the underpinnings of accreditation process.

Recommendations on criteria and standards to the Ministry of Republic of Srpska, cantonal ministries and Brčko District of BH for establishment and closure of higher education institutions and re-structuring of study programmes and Recommendations on criteria for the licensing of higher education institutions and study programmes are policies that provide explicit guidelines to the education authorities and higher education institutions on how to regulate this area. This will lead to the alignment of regulations governing establishment, closure and the licensing of higher education institutions, and introduction of new study programmes. Drafting of these recommendations was guided by the legislative frameworks of competent education authorities, and best practices in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Republic of Srpska finalised the process of the licensing of existing higher education institutions and study programmes, whereas the licensing in cantons of the Federation is defined by law in a different way. The Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina is only at the beginning with regard to formation of higher education institutions. Set of recommendations from this area should serve to education authorities to increase efforts toward consistent application of their standards and norms for higher education.

In March 2011, WUS Austria launched initiative for organising the conference "Conditions and standards for development and implementation of doctoral programmes in Bosnia and Herzegovina". As the Programme of work for 2011 foresaw holding of conference "How to structure doctoral studies and quality assurance at doctoral level", in view of a cost-effective budget spending, it was agreed that the Agency should actively participate and provide its support in the organisation of the conference, which was successfully seen through in May. The conference was attended by representatives of the academic community from all eight public universities in BH, representatives of international organisations, public sector, and many guests, eminent professors from abroad. The discussion of the conference focused on

the design, management and implementation of doctoral education which has been recognized as one of the issues of vital importance, not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also across Europe.

The Programme of work of the Agency for 2011 foresees the drafting of Framework guidelines and criteria based on which BH's budgetary funds can be allocated to higher education institutions for science and research. In the letter from the Ministry of Civil Affairs of 20 September 2011 the Agency was advised that its proposal for Framework guidelines and criteria based on which BH's budgetary funds can be allocated to higher education institutions for science and research has no purpose, given that this matter is defined in Article 21 of the Framework law on the fundamentals of scientific and research work and coordination of national and international cooperation in scientific and research work in Bosnia and Herzegovina ("Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina" No. 43/09). Programme of work for 2011 foresees the collection of data on tuition fees charged by accredited higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, so that an overview of the current tuition fees can be made with a focus on the first and second cycle in the academic 2011/2012, for study programmes offered at higher education institutions in BH. This activity is finished.

In the reporting period, the activity from the Programme of work relating to collection of data relevant for development of higher education was continually conducted.

No.	Activity	Deadline	Stage of implementation
1.	Standards for establishment and closure of higher education institutions in BH and for re-structuring of study programmes	June	Activity completed (In line with Article 48 indent 3 of the Framework law the document is titled "Recommendations on criteria and standards to the Ministry of Republic of Srpska, cantonal ministries and Brčko District of BH for establishment and closure of higher education institutions and for re-structuring of study programmes").
2.	Standards for the licensing of higher education institutions and study programmes	June	Activity completed (In line with Article 48 indent 4 of the Framework law, title of the document is "Recommendations on criteria for the licensing of higher education institutions and study programmes"). Activity was completed in December.
3.	Conference on the third cycle "How to structure the doctoral studies and quality assurance at doctoral level".	June	Activity completed

4.	General guidelines and criteria for allocation of BH budgetary resources to higher education institutions for scientific and research work	December	In the opinion of the Ministry of Civil Affairs, this activity is defined by the Framework law on the fundamentals of scientific and research work and coordination of national and international cooperation in scientific and research work in Bosnia and Herzegovina ("Official Gazette of BH" No. 43/09)
5.	Collection of data on tuition fees on accredited higher education institutions in BH	September	Activity completed Analysis of tuition fees on higher education institutions for the academic year 2011/2012 in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Table 1 Planned and conducted activities of the Sector for development of higher education

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Programme of work of the Agency for 2011 has been developed under the presumption that the accreditation process would start in 2011 and that it would be completed in a certain number of higher education institutions. However, this did not happen. Competences of the Agency in terms of accreditation are provided for in Article 49 of the Framework law, which implies that exercise of Agency's competences begins only then when the Agency receives the proposal for appointment of panel of experts from the relevant education authority. The Agency received the request referred to in Article 49 of the Framework law in late 2011 and it is currently being processed.

In a broader sense, the process of accreditation has begun, since it implies activities of higher education institutions within the internal quality assurance system, as well as procedures taken by the relevant education authorities and the Agency in the external quality assurance system, as provided for in Article 49 of the Framework law. Some higher education institutions have on their own initiative notified the Agency about them being prepared for the accreditation process by having completed their self-evaluation reports. However, the delay in accreditation is evident. Article 61 of the Framework law reads that "*with the date of this Law coming into force, existing private higher education institutions shall receive provisional accreditation from the relevant institution*". Paragraph 2 of this Article says that "*accreditation of higher education institutions shall be conducted in the period of no more than two years, that is four years (amendments to the Law) from the date of this Law coming into force*". As the Framework law was published on 7 August 2007 and came into effect on the eighth day after its publication, the closing date of the defined period is 15 August 2011, taking into consideration the amendments to the Law ("Official Gazette of BH", No. 59/09).

As it has been mentioned, the Agency has fulfilled its duty to develop the legislative framework for accreditation of higher education institutions. Apart from the Decision on norms for determining minimum standards in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the reporting period two important policies referred to in Article 49 of the Framework law were adopted:

- Instruction for reviewing the compliance of decision on accreditation with the minimum standards in higher education and criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (adopted on 4 November and published on the web site of the Agency),
- Rule book on keeping the National register of accredited higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (adopted on 28 October 2011 and published in the ("Official Gazette of BH", No. 91/11).

Instruction for reviewing the compliance of decision on accreditation with the minimum standards in higher education and criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina defines how the Agency proceeds after the decision on accreditation has been issued. Compliance of the decision is the main pre-requisite for the inclusion of accreditation (institution) in the National register of accredited higher education institutions. The Rule book on keeping the National register of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina defines how the public records of accredited higher education institutions are organised, administered and made publicly available.

In the reporting period, the Sector for quality assurance reviewed the list of national and international experts by science/art disciplines and science/art sub-disciplines so as to define a proposal for the public competition for the selection of experts from the relevant science/art disciplines and sub-disciplines that the list is lacking. On the basis of the conducted analysis of the list of national and international experts, the Sector produced the draft of amendment to the Decision on criteria for selection of national and international experts that conduct quality assessment and review and give recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes. This draft will be submitted in the following period to the management of the Agency for further procedure.

In the frame of ESABiH project several workshops were prepared and organised. Participants to these workshops were representatives of three categories of experts, that is representatives of the academic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, economy and practice and representatives of students. Workshops were held in Sarajevo, Tuzla, Mostar and Bihać.

Sector officials also provided their assistance to the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina in developing of the Baseline of the Qualifications Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

No.	Activity	Deadline	Stage of implementation
1.	Review of the list of national and international experts for the previous year	January	Completed activity
2.	Proposal for amendment to the Decision on criteria for selection of national and international experts	February	Completed activity
3.	Launch of public competition for selection of national and international experts for those categories that are found to be lacking in the list	February	Activity not undertaken
4.	Selection of experts that meet the criteria set out in the Decision on criteria for selection of national and international experts Coordination with competent education authorities in BH and the Department for Education of the Brčko District of BH for the purpose of adopting the list of experts	March-April	Activity not undertaken Activity has not been undertaken because it is interlinked with the public competition procedure
5.	Developing the draft of standards for internal quality assurance and external quality assurance	March	Completed activity In the Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina, No. 100/11 the Decision on norms for determining minimum standards in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina was published
6.	Workshops for experts, staff of education authorities and Sector for quality assurance	Continuous activity	Completed activity
7.	Appointment of panel of experts for selection of experts from the list of experts; Giving recommendation on accreditation to the competent education authorities based on the	Continuous activity	Activity underway Competent education authorities of the Zenica-Doboj Canton received request from University of Zenica

	opinion of the panel of experts; Reviewing compliance of the decision on accreditation		and referred request to the Agency to appoint the panel of experts. Appointment procedure is underway.
8.	Giving recommendation on accreditation to the competent education authorities based on the opinion of the panel of experts; Reviewing compliance of the decision on accreditation	Continuous activity	Activity not undertaken It is closely linked to the accreditation procedure
9.	Adoption of the Rule book on the National register of accredited higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina	April-May	Activity completed The Rule book was published in the Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina, No. 91/11
10.	Establishment and keeping of the National register of accredited higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Continuous activity	Activity not undertaken It is linked to the completion of the accreditation procedure
11.	Publication of the list of accredited higher education institutions on the web site of the Agency and in the Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Continuous activity	Activity not undertaken It is linked to the completion of the accreditation procedure

Table 2. Planned and conducted activities of the Sector for quality assurance

5. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Given that development of higher education and quality assurance have significant European dimension, in the reporting period the Agency carried out a number of international activities relating to the exchange of good European practices and recognizability of the Agency both in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Europe.

5.1. Membership of the Agency with international quality assurance associations in higher education

These activities were carried out in line with Article 48, indent 9 of the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina under which the Agency is competent to

"represent Bosnia and Herzegovina in the international organizations for quality in higher education". By the Conclusion of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina No.: 05-07-3601-22/09, which was passed at the 105th meeting held on 18 November 2009, the Agency was approved to initiate the membership procedure for the following four European and international associations: ENQA – *the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education* (www.enqa.eu), EQAR – *the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education* (www.eqar.eu)⁵, INQAAHE – *the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education* (www.inqaah.org) i CEENQA – *the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education* (www.ceenetwork.hu).

The Agency completed the first phase of joining the international associations for quality assurance in higher education by having reached the possible level of memberships in the aforementioned associations. The Agency became the full member of INQAAHE and CEENQA. At the most recent meeting of the General Assembly of CEENQA, that was held in Split in late May this year, the new management members were elected, and Boris Ćurković, deputy director of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance (HEA), was elected into the Executive Board. The Agency has also acquired an associate membership of ENQA, underlying the partnership between the Agency and this highly regarded European association.

ENQA and EQAR have extremely strict criteria for admission of full members. The main prerequisite is that the applicant agency must have continually undertaken external quality assurance activities in higher education for two years, and the core admission criterion is that these activities are carried out in compliance with the ESG. Considering that the Agency currently does not meet the main requirement of being active for two years in the area of external quality assurance, the full membership of ENQA and EQAR listing constitute a goal that the Agency aims to achieve in the second phase, by submitting the application two years after the first accreditation has been launched.

5.2. Cooperation with regional and European quality assurance agencies and participation in international forums for quality assurance in higher education

In the reporting period the Agency continued its cooperation with the regional quality assurance agencies and with other European and international bodies in this area. The Agency entered into Memorandum of Understanding with the Russian National centre for Public Accreditation.

⁵ With regard to EQAR, the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina at its 52nd Meeting held on 12 June 2008, issued Decision on registration of the Council of Ministers of BiH on EQAR (CoM no. 108/08 as of 12 June 2008). This decision has been carried out and the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the EQAR Assembly appointed, making Bosnia and Herzegovina a full member of this association at a political level. In the Statute of EQAR there are three types of statuses defined: governmental membership (which Bosnia and Herzegovina successfully acquired), social partners membership and agencies listed in the Register.

Regional cooperation and exchange of experiences have been increased through the new project of UNESCO and the Global Initiative on Quality Assurance Capacity of the World Bank (GIQAC) on the theme of „Implementing the ESG in the Balkan Region“. Representatives of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance (HEA) are involved in this Project and they participated in the first meeting in June, in Vienna. The meeting was organised by the European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQA) and the Austrian Accreditation Council (AAC). The Project aims to support the regional quality assurance agencies to comply with internationally accepted standards such as the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and to create a shared pool of experts for quality assurance in higher education.

Well established relations and cooperation with the European agencies and bodies, as well as participation in international projects and forums are aimed at strengthening the credibility of the Agency and transferring positive experiences and European practices into the quality assurance system in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONALLY FUNDED PROJECTS

Through this type of activity the international assistance to the Agency is ensured, mainly in terms of technical assistance, either through consultation and facilitation by European experts in the core activities of the Agency, or through exchange of experiences with an aim to support institutional development of the Agency and its staff. Also, through a part of these projects the Agency receives donations of equipment.

6.1. Project "Support to establishment and functioning of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance"

Project "Support to establishment and functioning of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance" (2009 – 2011) is financed by the Austrian Development Agency and is fully implemented by the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance. The main objective of the project is establishment and implementation of a functional and efficient policy development system of quality assurance in higher education. The key components of the project are:

- Institutional strengthening and capacity building of the Agency;
- Procurement of technical and IT equipment;
- Raising public awareness of the importance of quality assurance;
- Project management.

In the period between 1 January and 31 December 2011 the Agency continued the project implementation according to the planned dynamics.

In the frame of the component „Capacity building“, the study visit to Belgium was organised from 21 until 24 March. The six delegates of the Agency, including two members of the Steering Board, had the opportunity to learn about the activities of the Belgian agency VLHORA and to meet the representatives of the Dutch agency for accreditation NVAO, as well as representatives of relevant institutions in higher education (EQAR, the Directorate-General for Education and Culture of the European Commission, the Mission of BH to EU, Erasmushogeschole).

The regional conference „From quality assurance to quality culture“ was held on 5 and 6 December 2011 in Sarajevo. The conference was attended by 94 participants in total, among whom, apart from the HEA staff and partner organisations in BH, 50 representatives of 28 BH higher education institutions, 10 representatives of education ministries, president of ENQA, Achim Hopbach, and 9 representatives of regional quality assurance agencies (CAQA, ASHE, ARACIS, HAC, SQAA, representative from the University College Cork in Ireland and an independent expert from the Centre for Education Policy in Serbia).

The organisation of the Regional conference, that was regarded as highly successful by both national and international participants, marks the completion of all activities planned in the Component 1.

The planned activities of component „Procurement of technical and IT equipment“ were completed and they are the installation of IT equipment and IP telephony, purchase of two passenger vehicles, additional IT equipment and furniture for the small meeting room/library. In line with the agreement on introduction of document management system, two meetings were held, a detailed business request was created and a three-day workshop training was held for the HEA staff. DMS is currently in the testing phase and it is available for use to all employees to identify any possible errors in the processes and to efficiently adapt the system to the needs of the Agency and its staff.

In the frame of the component "Raising public awareness" the activities that have been finalised are the production of a promotional TV ad, radio jingle and design of web banners, as well as design and the printing of the promotional and informative materials (folders, brochures, notepads and envelopes). In line with the Plan of communication activities the media campaign was carried out in the period from 28 October until 28 November 2011.

Workshop for students "Importance of the role of students in quality assurance in higher education" was held on 3 and 4 November 2011 and it is the first workshop in the series of those relating to students that will be held in the project extension period. The workshop gathered 58 students – representatives of all HEIs in BH, representatives of students' associations and organisations in BH, experts from the HEA list. The presentations were given by the HEA staff and student organisations from BH and Croatia.

In the frame of the fourth component, the Project team delivered the 2010 report to the donor including the independent audit office report. In August 2011 the semi-annual Activity report

was also delivered to the donor. In June and July the Project team prepared the Request for extension of the project which has been delivered to the donor on 2 August 2011. The extension of the project from 1 October 2011 until 31 May 2012 (8 months) was formally approved by the donor on 17 August 2011.

6.2. Other international projects

The Agency has actively participated in four EU Tempus projects related to quality assurance, and they are the following:

- *Strengthening Quality Assurance System within Western Balkan HEIs in Support of National and Regional Planning – CUBRIK* – the co-ordinator being the University of Alicante, Spain. The aim of this project is to strengthen capacities of higher education institutions toward establishing adequate internal quality system, to strengthen quality assurance agencies and increase regional cooperation. The project is entirely based on consistent implementation of ESG.
- *EU standards for accreditation of study programs on BH universities – ESABIH* – the co-ordinator being Katholieke Hogeschool Sint-Lieven, Belgium. Through this project Criteria for accreditation of study programmes have been developed based on which the pilot accreditation of 33 study programmes from 8 public universities was conducted.
- *Strategic Management of Higher Education Institutions Based on Integrated Quality Assurance System – SHEQA*. The project leader is Katholieke Hogeschool Sint-Lieven from Belgium, and the partner from Bosnia and Herzegovina is the University of Mostar. The aim of this project is to develop key performance indicators (KPI) for higher education institutions to help an institution follow progress indicators, and to support ministries and agencies in decision-making related to institutions. Through this project information system will be developed to support KPIs.
- *Building Capacity for Structural Reform in Higher Education of Western Balkan Countries – STREW*. The project leader is the University of Novi Sad. This regional Tempus project is focused on developing the institutional system of Western Balkan countries to support and increase reforms in and development of higher education.

As a part of wider consortia, the Agency has also made an application for five new projects under the Tempus IV – 4th Call for Proposals:

- *Development of the QA Systems at Private Higher Education Institutions in BiH – QASPHEI* – project leader is WUS Austria.
- *Skills Enhancement for European Project Management – SEEPROM* – project leader is Mediterranean Universities Union, Italy.
- *Embedding Quality Assurance in Doctoral Education* – project leader is WUS Austria and Medical Faculty of the University of Heidelberg, Germany.

- *Development of the third cycle curricula in the area of business administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina – DIBA* – project leader is the University of Paderbron, Germany and the University of Zenica.
- *Academic Co-operation Centres for Society – ACCESS* – project leader is WUS Austria and the University of Presov, Slovakia.

In the reporting period, the Agency took part in the joint project of the European Commission and the Council of Europe under the name "Strengthening higher education III" which ended on 31 March this year, and in the project "Support to higher education reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina" financed by the European Commission and implemented by consortium led by the German company GOPA, which ended officially with the final conference held on 20 October 2011 in Sarajevo.

7. CONCLUSION

In the reporting period, activities of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance were carried out mainly in conformity with the Agency's Programme of Work for 2011 which was adopted at the 13th meeting of the Agency's Steering Board, held on 11 April 2010, after which the Programme was forwarded to the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and adopted at the 152nd meeting, held on 1 June 2011.

In 2011 the Agency finished the drafting of the by-laws from its scope of authority. This paved the way to committing itself in the future to fulfil the remaining of the statutory obligations contained in Article 48 and 49 of the Framework law, which is a continuous process. In the coming period the Agency will make further efforts in strengthening capacities necessary for making analyses, reports and recommendations to be able to efficiently and lawfully influence the development of higher education. Also, the Agency will exercise its competences in the area of accreditation under the Article 49 of the Framework law. Strongly committed to the enforcement of the Framework law in the reporting period, the Agency has seriously considered the initiative to urge the Ministry of Civil Affairs in BH to initiate the amendments to the Framework law, and this remains to be decided in 2012.

In the forthcoming period the process of accreditation is expected to be stepped up and completed. Only after its completion will it be possible to determine the quality of higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular with regard to the European standards in this area.

As continuous development of international cooperation and building international credibility are of particular interest to the Agency, in the reporting period all obligations arising from the membership with international associations were fulfilled through active involvement of the Agency staff.

Given that during the reporting period the Decisions on temporary financing of institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and international obligations of Bosnia and Herzegovina were in force, the Agency made major efforts to successfully carry out activities from the Programme of work with the available resources.

**APPENDIX 6:
LIST OF OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS WITH WEB-
LINKS**

1. Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina
<http://hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/Zakoni-propisi/?id=91&langTag=en-US>
2. Statute of the Agency
http://hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/interni_akti/?id=3341&langTag=en-US
3. Decision on Criteria for Election of Domestic and International Experts to Provide Assessment and Conduct Quality Reviews and Give Recommendation on Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes in BH ("Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina" No. 88/09),
http://hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/?id=2480&langTag=en-US
4. Decision on Manner of Creating Commission for Election of Domestic and International Experts to Provide Assessment and Conduct Quality Reviews and Give Recommendation on Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes, No. 01-50-624-1/09 of 6 October 2009,
http://hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/?id=2484&langTag=en-US
5. Public competition for the election of domestic and international experts to provide assessment and conduct quality reviews and give recommendation on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes,
<http://hea.gov.ba/Konkursi-tenderi/?id=719&langTag=en-US>
6. Instruction on Form and Content of Diploma and Diploma Supplement ("Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina" No. 86/09),
http://hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/?id=5251&langTag=en-US
7. Criteria for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, ("Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina" No. 75/10),
http://hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/Default.aspx?id=2462&langTag=en-US
8. Rulebook on Keeping the National Register of Accredited Higher Education Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina,
http://hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/?id=3376&langTag=en-US
9. Instruction for Reviewing the Compliance of Decision on Accreditation with the Minimum Standards in Higher Education and Criteria for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina,
http://hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/?id=3316&langTag=en-US
10. Decision on Norms for Determining Minimum Standards in Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the accompanying Rules for attaining the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance,
http://hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/?id=3512&langTag=en-US

11. Recommendations on Criteria and Standards to the Ministry of the Republic of Srpska, Cantonal Ministries and the Brčko District for Establishment and Closure of Higher Education Institutions and Re-structuring of Study Programmes,
http://hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/?id=3331&langTag=en-US
12. Recommendations on Criteria for the Licensing of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes in Bosnia and Herzegovina
http://hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/?id=3330&langTag=en-US