

European Quality Assurance
Register for Higher Education



Working Group 2: External Review of Agencies

Colin Tück

Bonn, 5 July 2011

ASEM Expert Seminar on Regional Quality Assurance

Outline



- 1. About EQAR and its Objectives**
2. Findings from EQAR's Self-Evaluation
3. Challenges Ahead

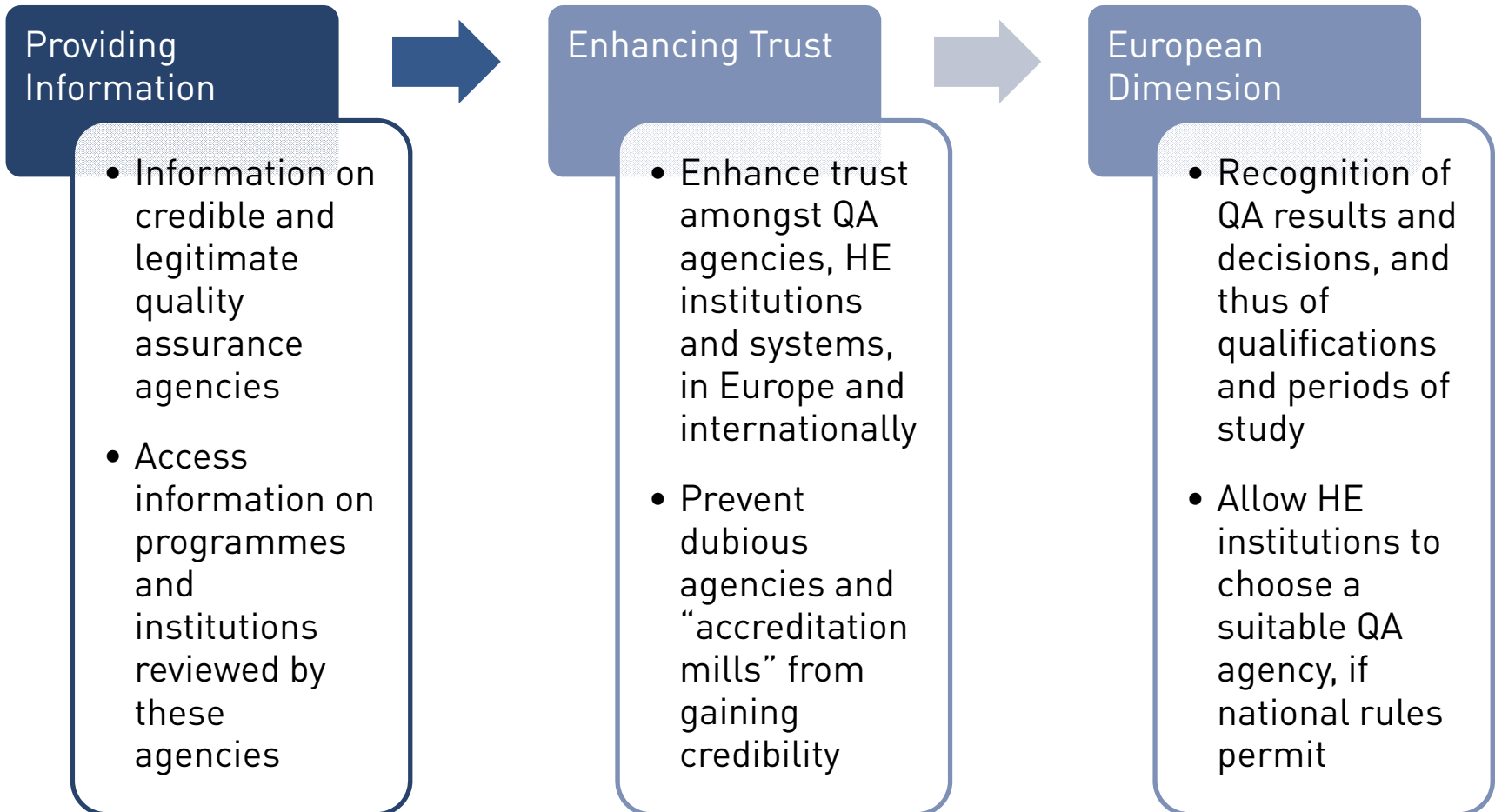
The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)



- A register of **credible and legitimate quality assurance agencies** operating in Europe
- Ultimate criterion: substantial compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG)
- Based on external review of the agency
- Registration is voluntary, unless by national law
- Governed by stakeholders and governments jointly, managed by E4 (institutions, students, QA agencies)



EQAR Objectives

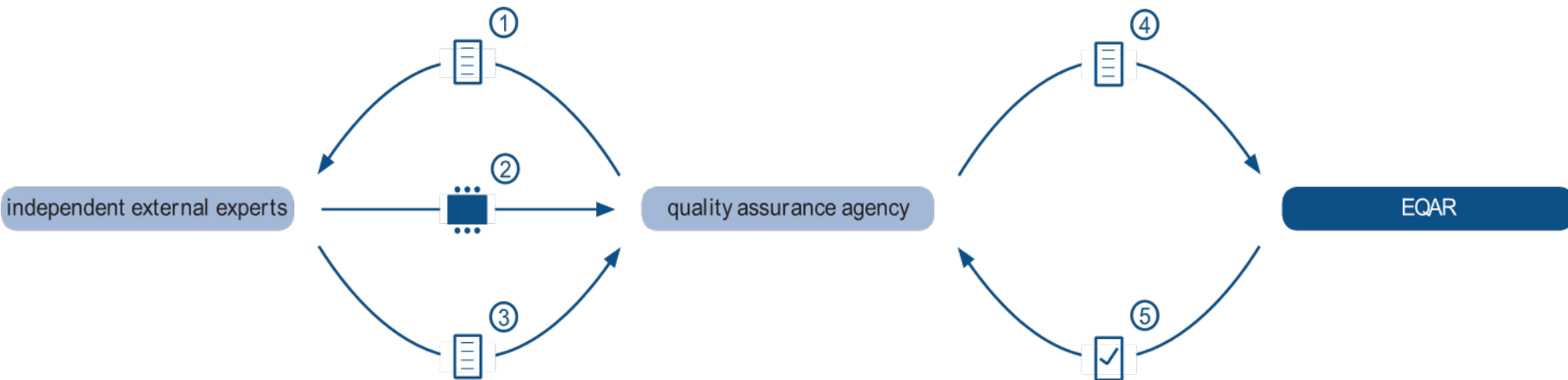


ENQA & EQAR



- ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education)
 - Membership-based organisation of QA agencies
 - Representative body at European level
 - Networking, capacity building, policy making etc
- EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register)
 - Co-owned by governments and stakeholders
 - Specific responsibility: independently manage a register of QA agencies that comply with the ESG
 - Registered QA agencies are not members

External Review and Inclusion on the Register

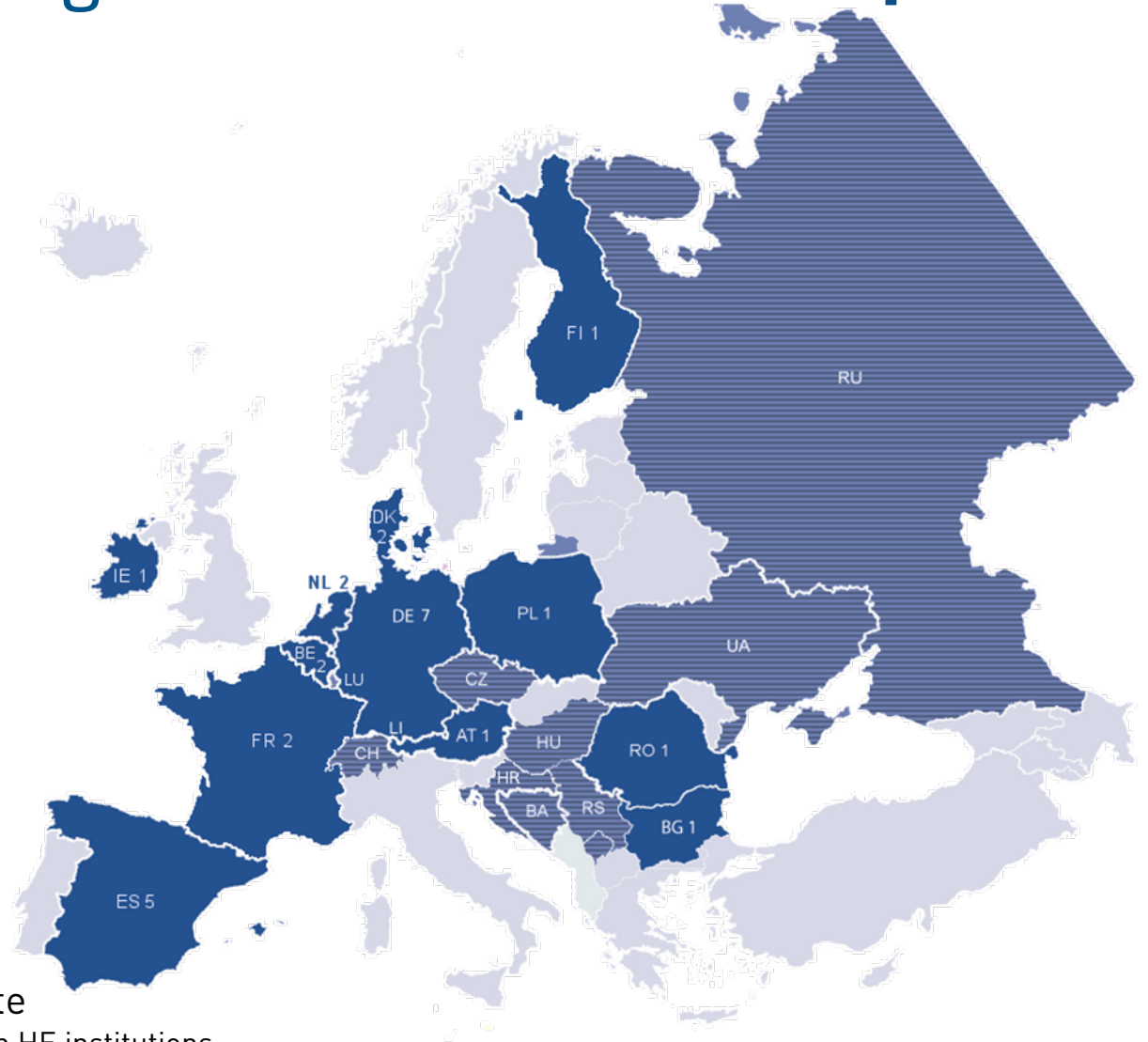


1. **self-evaluation** produced by the QA agency
2. **site visit** by independent review team (QA professionals, students and academics)
3. external **review report** according to ESG parts 2 & 3
4. **application** for inclusion on EQAR
5. **decision** by EQAR Register Committee

Applications and Registered Agencies



Registered	26
Applications	35
Pending	1



■ Official seat

■ Where agencies also operate

(Listed agencies have been working with HE institutions in these countries. This does not imply any official recognition or mandate.)

Outline



1. About EQAR and its Objectives
- 2. Findings from EQAR's Self-Evaluation**
3. Challenges Ahead

Key Findings from EQAR's Self-Evaluation

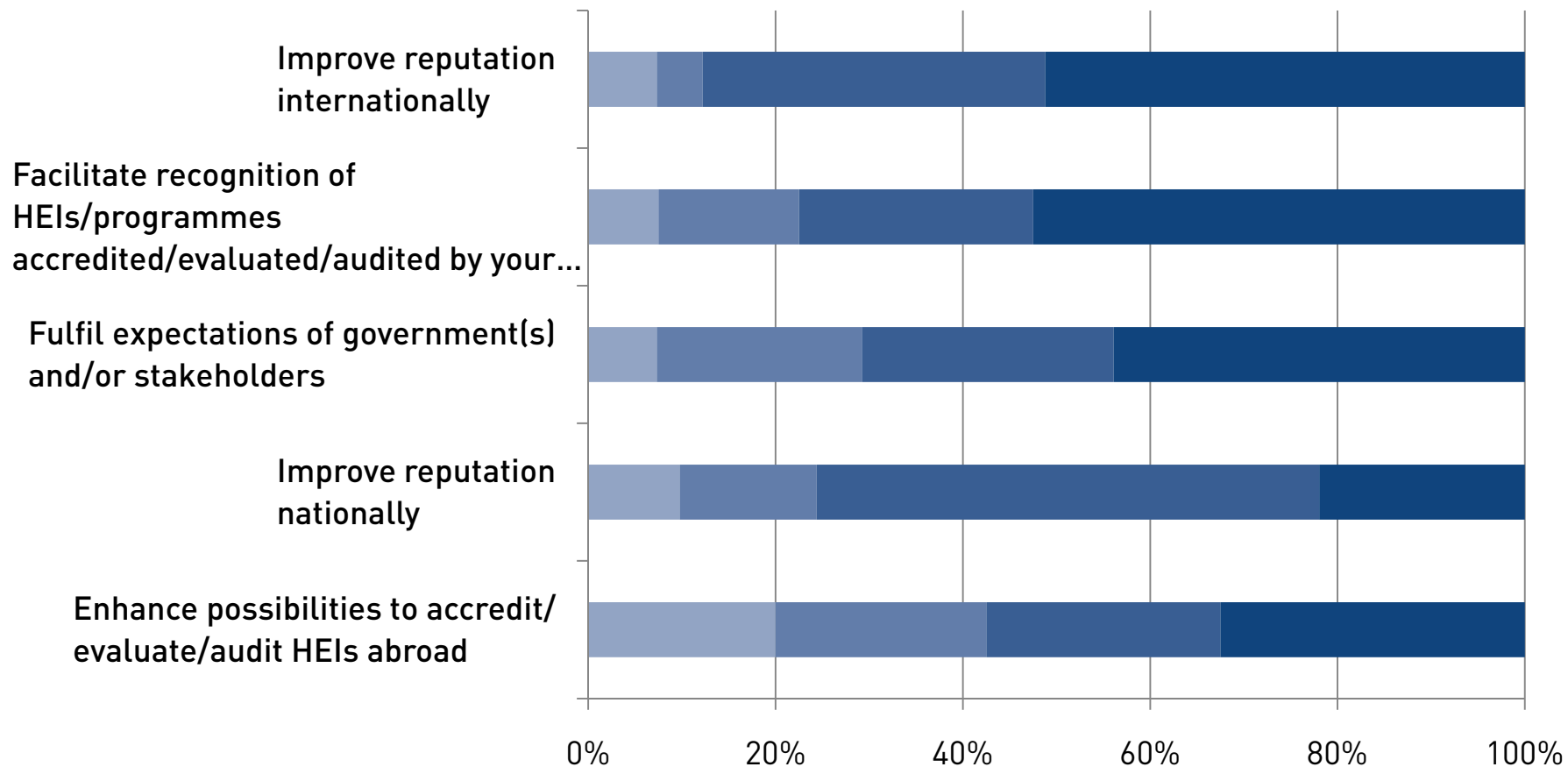


- Organisational structure is by and large supported by governments and stakeholders
- Most European QA agencies aim for registration
- QA agencies expect (official) recognition of their work (and qualifications) abroad through EQAR
- Some governments have started to use EQAR as a reference for different purposes

Agencies' Motivations for Registration on EQAR



■ not relevant at all ■ not particularly relevant ■ rather relevant ■ very relevant



EQAR as Reference for (National) Legislation



- **Denmark I:** automatic recognition of external quality assurance conducted by an EQAR-registered agency for the purpose of approval of Danish degrees offered abroad
- **Denmark II:** recognition of accreditation by EQAR-registered agencies for ERASMUS Mundus joint programmes of Danish and foreign higher ed. institutions
- **Germany:** for joint programmes, nationally-recognised QA agencies can “ratify” decisions from foreign EQAR-registered agencies

EQAR as Reference for (National) Legislation – cont'd



- **Lithuania:** institutional/programme review can be conducted by any EQAR-registered agency as basis for an accreditation decision by the national QA agency
- **Romania:** after initial accreditation by national agency, HE institutions can choose from EQAR-registered agencies freely for periodic evaluation

Firm proposals made to parliament:

- **Austria:** plan to allow universities to choose freely from amongst registered agencies for periodic audit
- **Liechtenstein:** no national agency, envisaged that the university choose any EQAR-registered agency to be externally reviewed

Outline



1. About EQAR and its Objectives
2. Findings from EQAR's Self-Evaluation
- 3. Challenges Ahead**

Challenges Ahead



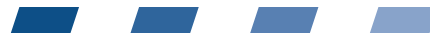
- Transparency and Communication
 - Does the principle of confidentiality of applications (and thus refusals) benefit EQAR's aims?
 - How to demonstrate more effectively EQAR's contribution to the EHEA and European dimension of QA?
- Enhancing the Use and Impact
 - Attractiveness for non-European agencies?
 - How to promote at national level the use of the Register to recognise foreign QA agencies and their decisions?
 - How to monitor the use and impact more systematically?

Thank you for your attention!

Contact:

colin.tueck@eqar.eu

+32 2 234 39 11



Target Groups

edofar



Higher Education Institutions

- Identify legitimate and trustworthy agencies
- Better recognition of their programmes abroad
- Simplified QA of joint programmes



Students & Labour Market



- Identify reviewed study programmes/institutions
- Better recognition of qualifications abroad
- Protection from illegitimate agencies/providers

Governments & Recognition Bodies

- Recognise the work of trustworthy agencies
- Allow their institutions to choose an agency



Quality Assurance Agencies

- Improve their standing at European level
- Work internationally/cross-border

