

European Quality Forum Conclusions

Georg Winckler
President
European University Association

Munich, 25 November 2006

QA: an essential tool

- Because of the Bologna process
- Because of the Lisbon objectives
- Because of its impact on strengthening institutions

⇒ QC and QA will ensure:

- Trust
- Transparency
- Improvement of quality levels

QA: The three levels

- **The institution level:** Primary responsibility for quality => Quality Culture and Creativity projects
- **The national level:** Ideally, a partnership (institution/government/agency) to develop procedures that are adapted to the national context
- **European level:** A partnership (ENQA, ESIB, EUA, EURASHE, BFUG) to ensure the creation of the EHEA

Bergen agreement (1)

- A generic set of principles and reference points (European Standards and Guidelines for QA in higher education-ESG)
- **Risk:**
 - ✓ understanding the ESG as prescriptive standards and a compliance list to be checked
 - OR
 - ✓ going too far in terms of local interpretations

Bergen agreement (2)

- Need to ensure the quality of the quality assurance procedures, i.e. the review of agencies
- The Bergen compromise:
 - ✓ To make it, in the first instance, a national process
 - ✓ To speak of it as a peer-review process
- Importance to ensure:
 - ✓ That, although nationally organised, these reviews are European
 - ✓ Stakeholders involvement in the process (students, HEIs) ...5...

From Bergen to London: A register of QA agencies operating in Europe (1)

- **Aim:** To ensure the robustness of information concerning the QA procedures used in Europe
- **Likely impact:** the most concrete tool in the construction of the EHEA and for the development of international partnerships

From Bergen to London: A register of QA agencies operating in Europe (2)

■ Risks:

- ✓ a soft instrument
- ✓ controlled by the QA agencies

■ Principles:

- ✓ An exclusive register that filters out the poor agencies
- ✓ A service to students, employers and HEIs

=> ensure appropriate checks and balances, with participation of:

- ✓ students and HEIs
- ✓ QA agencies
- ✓ representatives from society

- ... it is up to **those who are involved** in the systems to provide means of providing confidence."

(ENQA Convergence Study 2005)