Self-assessment report

Banja Luka, February 2017
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<tr>
<td>BiH</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
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<td>HEI</td>
<td>Higher Education Institution</td>
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<td>ESG</td>
<td>Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area</td>
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<td>ENQA</td>
<td>European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education</td>
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<td>FLHE</td>
<td>Framework Law on Higher Education in BiH</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>The European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>EQAR</td>
<td>European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education</td>
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<td>IPA</td>
<td>Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA BiH</td>
<td>The Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
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<td>SB</td>
<td>The Steering Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCA BiH</td>
<td>Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
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<td>CM BiH</td>
<td>The Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAR</td>
<td>Self-assessment report (of the Agency)</td>
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<td>SER</td>
<td>Self-evaluation report (of HEIs)</td>
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<td>CE</td>
<td>Committee of Experts</td>
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<td>EHEA</td>
<td>European Higher Education Area</td>
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<td>ECTS</td>
<td>European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System</td>
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<td>FBiH</td>
<td>Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
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<td>RS</td>
<td>The Republic of Srpska</td>
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<tr>
<td>BD BiH</td>
<td>Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEAs</td>
<td>Competent Education Authorities</td>
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<td>RC BiH</td>
<td>The BiH Rector’s Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIR</td>
<td>Centre for Information and Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Study Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUA</td>
<td>European University Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>WUS Austria</td>
<td>World University Service Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUS BiH</td>
<td>World University Service of Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEAARS</td>
<td>Higher Education Accreditation Agency of Republika Srpska</td>
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1 INTRODUCTION

In September 2003, Bosnia and Herzegovina approached the Bologna Process in Berlin and, thus, assumed the obligation to reform their higher education towards the objectives of the Bologna Declaration. The higher education reforms and development of new institutional capacities in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina gained a significant boost in 2007 with the adoption of the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina ("Official Gazette of BiH", No. 59/07 and 59/09; http://www.hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/Zakoni-propisi/?id=105) (hereinafter: the Framework Law), which is a key reform measure for higher education in BiH. The Framework Law recognized higher education as an activity of special social interest for BiH, and higher education institutions as drivers of development and the professional, educational and cultural progress of society, the promotion of a democratic, civil society and the achievement of high standards in teaching and research.

The Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance (hereinafter: the Agency) has been established by the Framework Law, and which from the beginning of its work, within its competence, actively participates in the implementation of reforms in higher education, especially in the field of quality assurance. The quality assurance was a new practice in higher education in BiH then and the introduction of mechanisms and procedures that will value quality and continuously improve it represented a challenge for HEIs and other participants in the system of higher education in BiH. Quality education and its improvement becomes the central theme of all educational policies in BiH. Quality communication and involvement of all stakeholders in the many activities of the Agency is a practice that is applied in the work of the Agency. The Agency has continuously carried out various activities to raise public awareness of the importance of quality assurance in higher education, especially the academic community on which the primary responsibility for quality assurance in higher education lies. Aware of the fact that quality assurance mechanisms, whether external or internal, remain only mechanical processes if they do not include the development of a culture of quality, the Agency has devoted a part of its activities to the promotion of this important element.

With the entry into force of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement1 between the European Communities and their Member States, on the one hand, and Bosnia and Herzegovina on the other hand, on June 1st, 2015, with Article 100, BiH obliged that "priorities for higher education systems have to achieve the objectives of the Bologna Declaration within the intergovernmental Bologna Process."

Throughout previous years of work, the Agency has institutionally strengthened, using and learning from the relevant examples of the best European practice. The intention of the Agency is that in the future work and participation in the reform process remains recognized as a significant factor in the reform of higher education in BiH.

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2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

The priority of the Agency’s current work is functioning in accordance with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG). Since the ESG anticipate periodic external review of HEIs and quality assurance agencies, the Agency has committed itself to an external review by independent experts of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (hereinafter: ENQA) in order to gain full membership in this association.

The Agency first acquired the status of an affiliate member of the ENQA in February 2010. A prerequisite for the application of any agency for full membership in the ENQA was to perform at least two years of activities in the field of quality assurance. After the Agency in early 2014 met this precondition, the Agency initiated activities for full membership in the ENQA. The Steering Board of the Agency (hereinafter: the SB of the Agency) at the 27th session held on May 12th, 2014 gave their approval for the launch of activities of the Agency for full membership in the ENQA. The Agency informed of its intention the Ministry of Civil Affairs BIH (hereinafter: MCA BIH).

The Agency sent a request for proceedings for full membership in the ENQA on June 20th, 2014. The ENQA Secretariat informed the Agency on July 10th, 2014 that for the application for full membership it is necessary to develop a self-assessment report (SAR) of the Agency according to the revised ESG, which have already been agreed, and which would be officially adopted at the Conference of Ministers responsible for higher education of the European Higher Education Area (hereinafter: EHEA) in May 2015 in Yerevan, Armenia. The same conditions apply for membership and listings in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (hereinafter: EQAR).

In order to implement self-assessment and designing of the SAR in the Agency, in April 2014 was formed the Team for self-assessment consisting of representatives of all sectors and the management of the Agency. The Team had the support of the IPA Twinning experts during the implementation of the IPA Twinning Project "*Strengthening the institutional capacity for quality assurance*" (September 2013-September 2015).\(^2\)

The Committee for quality assurance of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance (hereinafter: the Committee) was formed according to the Decision of the Director of the Agency No. 06-33-1-356-1/16 on April 19th, 2016. The Committee is a permanent body of the Agency with a task to conduct activities of internal quality assurance of the Agency and designing the Agency's SAR annually in accordance with the II and III ESG groups. The Team for self-assessment was not a permanent body of the Agency and had a large number of members (nine) in relation to the total number of employees in the Agency, and, therefore, was replaced with the Committee from the practical reason. The functioning of the Committee is defined by the Rules of Procedure of the Committee. The Committee consists of representatives of all the Sectors of the Agency, namely:

1. Benjamin Muhamedbegović, Sector for Quality Assurance, President,
2. Sanela Pašić Delahmetović, Sector for Development of Higher Education, Member
3. Bojan Stevandić, Sector for Legal, Personnel, Financial and General Affairs, Member
4. Slavica Škoro, Management Cabinet, Member.

\(^2\) [http://hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/?id=6507](http://hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/?id=6507)
A part of the members of the Committee was also a part of the Team for self-assessment, thus, there is a continuity in self-assessment of the Agency’s activities. The Committee took as a starting point of its work the last working version of the SAR that was developed by the Team for self-assessment in August 2015. The Committee used the following ENQA and EQAR publications while developing the SAR:

- Guidelines for the ENQA Agency Reviews
- The Use and Interpretation of the ESG for the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education.

The stakeholders of the Agency were included in the process of self-assessment. The SAR was a topic of discussion with representatives of:

- The competent education authorities (hereinafter: the CEAs) and HEIs in BiH at the conference “Full membership in the ENQA—the significance for higher education in BiH”, held on March 9th, 2016 in Banja Luka and organized by the Agency.
- the Cantonal Ministers of Education at the meeting of the Coordination of Ministers of Education and Science in the FBIH organized by the Federal Ministry of Education and Science and held on December 5th, 2016 in Mostar.
- the Centre for Information and Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (hereinafter: CIR) (www.cip.gov.ba) at the meeting held on December 6th, 2016 in Mostar.
- Management, offices for quality and students from the accredited HEIs; the CEAs and Chambers of Commerce in: Herzegovina-Neretva, Zenica-Doboj, the Central Bosnian and Tuzla Cantons (January 23–24, 2017), Una-Sana Canton (February 2nd, 2017) and the Canton Sarajevo (February 6th, 2017),
- The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Srpska and the Agency for accreditation of higher education institutions of the Republic of Srpska (hereinafter: the HEAARS), on February 1st, 2017,
- The Department of education in the Government of Brčko District BiH and a representative of the Chamber of Commerce of Brčko District BiH,

The then version of the SAR was presented to the members of the SB of the Agency on 32nd session held on December 14th, 2015, as well as challenges in the self-assessment of the Agency, and at the 36th session held on February 16th, 2016 the SB took note of the final version of the SAR.
3 HIGHER EDUCATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE AGENCY

3.1 The higher education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Higher education in accordance with the Framework Law represents education after high school and is based on the principles of the Bologna Declaration. The objectives of higher education in BiH establish, protect and transmit knowledge and skills through teaching and scientific research, and, thus, contribute to the development of the capability of both individual and society.

The Framework Law, with the Article 5 stipulates that higher education is organized in three cycles:

- "the first cycle leads to the academic title of completed undergraduate studies or equivalent, obtained after a minimum of three and a maximum of four years of full time study after obtaining certificate on completed high school, which accumulates minimum of 180 or 240 ECTS,
- the second cycle leads to the academic title of Master or equivalent, obtained after completing undergraduate studies, lasting one or two years and is valued at 60 or 120 ECTS credits, and in a way that the sum of the first and the second cycle carries 300 ECTS credits, and
- the third cycle leads to a doctoral degree or equivalent, lasts three years and is valued with 180 ECTS points.

One semester carries 30 ECTS points in each cycle. From the provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article shall be exempt academic degree of medical doctor in the first cycle, which shall accumulate up to 360 ECTS ponits."

In BiH, in accordance with Article 10 of the Framework Law, there are two types of higher education institutions: universities and colleges. A university offers academic degrees in all three cycles and implements at least five different study programs from at least three scientific areas - natural sciences, technical sciences, biomedicine and health, biotechnical sciences, social sciences and the humanities. A college awards diplomas and degrees of the first cycle and realizes at least one study program from one scientific area.

The access to higher education have all those who have completed four years of high school in BiH, as well as students who have completed secondary school abroad, with previous procedures for recognizing foreign qualifications in accordance with the principles of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education in the EHEA.

3.1.1 Institutional structure of higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In accordance with the Constitution of BiH higher education in BiH is not the responsibility of the State, but belongs to the entity Republic of Srpska (hereinafter: RS), cantons in the entity Federation of BiH (hereinafter: FBiH) and Brčko District of BiH (hereinafter: BD BiH). The basis of institutional structure in the field of higher education in BiH is consisted of CEAs:

- Ministry of Education and Culture of RS
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- ten Cantonal Ministries of Education in FBiH, and
- Department of Education in the Government of the BD BIH.

These 12 CEAs pass laws in the field of education, adopt budgets for public education of HEIs in their area, determine education policy and have all other rights and obligations in their areas of responsibility. The CEAs are also responsible for licencing of HEIs and study programs in their areas of responsibility (see Appendix 2).

The Framework Law adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH (hereinafter: PA BiH), as a result of the agreement of both entities, also established the umbrella institutions of higher education in BiH with specific responsibilities for the entire BiH, and for the implementation of international commitments. These are: the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance, Centre for Information and Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education and the Rectors' Conference of BiH. The Agency is responsible for the area of quality assurance in higher education in the entire territory of BiH and representing BiH in international organisations for quality in higher education (See Chapter 4).

The CIR is an independent administrative organization in charge of information and activities of recognition in the field of higher education within the framework of the Lisbon Recognition Convention of Qualifications in Higher Education. The RC BiH determines and represents common interests of universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and effects cooperation with institutions of higher education in BiH. Full members may be the rectors of all the licensed and accredited universities in BiH, but in the current practice only rectors of the eight public universities in BiH are members of the Rectors' Conference of BiH. The RS Rectors' Conference was founded in the RS and it determines and represents the common interests of public and private universities in the RS. Full members are rectors of all licensed universities in RS.

The responsibility for the implementation of this law is assigned to the MCA BiH, as well as the responsibility for the coordination and development of higher education in BiH, the promotion of the integration of teaching and research, the promotion of cooperation between HEIs in BiH with institutions in Europe and the world, the promotion of equal access to higher education, the promotion of mobility and lifelong learning, the strengthening of bonds of higher education and the economy, and more. The jurisdiction of the MCA BiH is defined by the Article 15 of the Law on Ministries and Other Administrative Bodies BiH (“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 5/03). The MCA BiH represents the CM at the government level in the EQAR. BiH also has an appointed representative in the EQAR Assembly.

3.1.2 Higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina

According to the internal database which the Agency conducts on the basis of information obtained from the CEAs, a total of 46 licensed HEIs performs higher education activities in the academic 2016/2017 year. There are eight public universities (Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Bihać, the East Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zenica, University "Džemal Bijedić" in Mostar and the University of Mostar), and two public higher schools (the Higher Medical School in Prijedor and the Higher School of Hotel and Tourism in Trebinje).
According to the data from the BH Agency for Statistics, in the academic 2015/16, there were 94 090 students in Bosnia and Herzegovina (not including candidates for graduation):

- 88 107 at universities (out of which 49 883 were female students)
- 5 983 at colleges (out of which 2 574 were female students)

The Map of HEIs in BiH and the Review of licensed HEIs in BiH which perform the activity of higher education in the academic year 2016/2017 are listed in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of this SAR.

The Framework Law makes no distinction between public and private HEIs in terms of awarding academic degrees and titles and awarding academic degrees.

3.1.3 Licensing and accreditation

Licensing and accreditation are two separate processes that are carried out with the aim of quality assurance in higher education in BiH.

**Licensing** is the process of verifying compliance with the criteria (conditions) for licensing to be met

1.) HEIs in the process of establishment in order to obtain a license/permit for work and higher education activities

2.) existing HEIs in order to obtain a license/permit to gain approval to execute a new study program.

The CEAs are responsible for prescribing criteria for the licensing procedure of checking compliance with the criteria for licensing, as well as for the licensing issuance. The criteria for licensing are usually quantitatively standardized and relate to the spatial, material and technical, and human resources of higher education institution, such as the necessary surface in m²/student, the number of library units, the number of computers/student, the number of academic staff with full-time working hours, etc.

The participants in the licensing procedure are: a HEI, the CEA and Committees of Experts for licensing. The CEAs stipulated by the act the procedure of licensing with defined minimum:

- responsibilities and roles of each of the parties to the proceedings,
- the manner and the deadline for submission of the application,
- the necessary documents to be submitted with the application, which shall prove the fulfilment of the criteria for the licensing of content,
- feasibility study,
- a method of appointment and the work of the committee of experts for evaluation of the fulfilment of criteria for licensing,
- and other issues in order to effectively process licensing.

The licensing procedure initiates a HEI by submitting requests to the CEA to check the fulfilment of conditions for the start-up of work and performance of higher education activities of a HEI in the process of establishment and/or for the commencement of a new program of the existing HEI. Within the appropriate legal deadline, taking care to avoid conflicts of interest, the CEA form the Committee of Experts for Licensing whose task is to examine the fulfilment of defined criteria. The Committee is obliged to submit to the CEA the Report with the proposed outcome to issue a license or refuse the request.
In the RS licensing committees shall be appointed from a list of experts for licensing established by the Ministry of Education and Culture of RS on the basis of the Public Invitation, while some CEs in the cantons in the FBiH and the BD BiH appoint Committees of Experts for Licensing choosing from the Agency’s List of Experts.

The license is issued for a specified period of time, followed by the procedure of registration of the licensed institution or program in the register of licensed HEIs and study programs that the CEs register. The competent education inspections control the legality of the work of licensed HEIs and eventual departure from the fulfilled criteria for license and undertake measures defined by law.

The Agency, although it has no jurisdiction in the implementation of the licensing process of HEIs in BiH, upon completion of consultation with the CEs passed, in accordance with the obligation of the Framework Law in November 2012, the following:

1. Recommendations on criteria for licensing of higher education institutions and study programs in Bosnia and Herzegovina („Official gazette of BiH“, No. 13/12) http://www.hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/?id=3323
2. Recommendations on criteria and standards to the ministry of the Republic of Srpska, Cantonal Ministries and the Brčko District BiH for establishment and closure of higher education institutions and for restructuring of study programs („Official gazette of BiH“, No. 13/12) http://www.hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/?id=3320

The purpose of passing these two documents is to serve as recommendations and a framework for designing documents on licensing those CEs in BiH who have failed to pass previously. Given that the criteria for licensing, which were made by the CEs, are not harmonized throughout BiH, the Agency for the purpose of their harmonization and promotion developed proposals of the abovementioned two documents that passed the public consultation process and are still in the process of adoption.

Accreditation is the process which on the basis of the external audit and quality assessment confirms that HEIs in their work met the required standards and/or quality criteria. The Agency adopted the Criteria for accreditation of HEIs in BiH and they are unique and mandatory for all HEIs in BiH.

The participants in the process are: a HEI, the CEA, Agency and Committees of national and international experts for accreditation. The HEIs conduct self-evaluation, prepare their SERs where they describe their compliance of criteria, and the verification of compliance of criteria conducts an independent panel of accreditation experts appointed by the Agency on the basis of proposals of the CEs.

The process of accreditation of HEIs in BiH in accordance with the FLHE, documents of the Agency and the CEs, is shown in Figure 2 (The accreditation process of HEIs in BiH), and described in detail in chapter 10.3. of the SAR in the Implementing processes standard.

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6 http://hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/?id=3043
3.2. The beginnings of external quality assurance of HEIs in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The beginnings of quality assurance in higher education in BiH are formally associated with the accession of BiH to the Bologna process at the EHEA Conference of Ministers of Education in Berlin in 2003. The first case of external evaluation of HEIs in BiH took place in the academic year 2003/04 when all the then existing public universities in BiH passed the institutional evaluation of the European University Association (hereinafter: EUA), in accordance with the methodology of EUA. The evaluation was conducted in the framework of a joint project of the European Commission and the Council of Europe "Modernising the capacity for management and administration of universities in BiH". The objective of this evaluation was to assess the challenges that the BiH universities face in meeting the requirements for joining the EHEA by 2010. The result of this evaluation is the Report on the institutional evaluation of seven universities in BiH 7 in which a number of important issues to be addressed through the reform of higher education in BiH is determined, especially in the area of quality assurance.

The most important step for the field of quality assurance in BiH, in legislative terms, is the adoption of the FLHE in BiH in August 2007. This Law is the basic document for the establishment of a quality assurance system in BiH which also predicted the establishment of the Agency. In this period an important step was also created, by adopting the Decision of Adoption of Documents for Further Implementation of the Bologna Process in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Council of Ministers of BiH 8, on December 27th, 2007, including two documents from the field of quality assurance, as follows:

- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in BiH, and
- Recommendations for Implementing Quality Assurance in Higher Education in BiH.

These two documents are the result of a joint project of the European Commission and the Council of Europe "Strengthening Higher Education in BiH". The aim of their adoption was to help BiH to fulfill their obligations under the Bergen Communiqué from May 2005 in the preparation and implementation of reforms at the national level in the field of quality assurance. In this sense, they served the Agency for the adoption of certain regulations in the field of quality assurance.

The Agency, in the period 2009 to 2011, brought all the by-laws as provided in the Framework Law, which form the basis of the legal framework of the quality assurance system in BiH (see Appendix 3 - Quality Assurance in Higher Education in BiH).

During this period, the Agency organized the first practical workshops for:

- Representatives of HEIs - coordinators for internal quality assurance, workshop on "Internal quality system – how to prepare a self-evaluation report" in Sarajevo from 27th-29th October 2010.
- Experts for external quality assurance, in Banja Luka, Sarajevo, Mostar, Tuzla and Bihać.

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8 "Official Gazette of BiH", No. 13/08
9 [http://hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/?id=2215](http://hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/?id=2215)
10 [http://hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/?id=2570](http://hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/?id=2570)
The first external evaluations of HEIs in BiH started in 2012 and ended in 2013 with registration in the State Register of accredited HEIs in BiH. The Table No. 1 shows the dynamics of accreditation of HEIs in BiH per year since the beginning of the process to date.

Table No. 1: The dynamics of accreditation of the HEIs in BiH since the beginning of the process of accreditation to date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of accredited HEIs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>

The beginnings of the quality assurance of study programs in BiH are related to pilot accreditations:

- 33 study programs of the first and second cycle of studies at public universities in BiH within the ESABiH (European Union standards for accreditation of study programs on BH Universities) Project in the period 2011-2012, and
- 8 study programs of the third cycle of studies at public universities in BiH within the EQADE 12 (Embedding Quality Assurance in Doctoral Education) Project during 2014.

Although the Agency adopted necessary criteria for accreditation of the SPs of the first and second cycles of studies in 2013, the accreditation process of study programs in BiH has not yet begun. The criteria are, meanwhile, revised and aligned with the revised ESG, and the SB of the Agency gave its consent at the 36th session held on February 2nd, 2016, and they will be soon published in the Official Gazette of BiH. Accreditation of study programs is a major challenge for the Agency in the coming period.

4 HISTORY, PROFILE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE AGENCY

4.1 The background of the establishment of the Agency

The Agency has been established by the Framework Law as an independent administrative organization. The work of the Agency, in addition to the Framework Law, is determined by legal acts at the level of BiH governing organization, jurisdiction and functioning of the institutions of BiH. The Decision of the BiH Council of Ministers 13 established the seat of the Agency in Banja Luka and determined the beginning of work to be March 1st, 2008. The first management of the Agency, Director and two Deputies, the CM BiH appointed on October 30th, 200814, and ten members of the first SB of the Agency were chosen by the PA BiH on December 4th, 200815.

The Agency has become operational since July 2009, when Agency received the first civil servants and employees. In the first years the Agency focused its activities on producing documents for accreditation. The Agency adopted the Criteria for the selection of national and international experts

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11 Source: the Agency
12 [http://www.wus-austria.org/project/0/89.html](http://www.wus-austria.org/project/0/89.html)
13 “Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 10/08
14 “Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 101/08
15 “Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 100/08
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for accreditation and determined the list of experts (http://hea.gov.ba/kvalitet/lista_eksperata/Archive.aspx?template_id=52&pageIndex=1). Since quality assurance is a new practice in higher education, the Agency organized a workshop with the experts and representatives of HEIs and CEAs to inform and prepare for accreditation and was establishing cooperation with international institutions that follow developments in this area.

Although the Agency relatively quickly since its start of operation adopted the basic documents for the start of accreditation and implementation, other necessary activities for the first procedures of accreditation in BiH began in 2012. The CEAs participating in one part of the process did not at the same pace adopt by-laws necessary for the start and the operation of the accreditation process. Obligations that within six months from the adoption of the FLHE to harmonize laws on higher education in the RS, cantons in the FBiH and the BD BiH with the FLHE and the obligation of universities to integrate within one year, are also not fulfilled within legal deadlines. All this contributed to the delay in the process of accreditation of HEIs in BiH, as well as significant differences in the beginning of the process of accreditation in cantons in FBiH. Unfortunately, despite numerous activities of the Agency in the BD BiH, there have still not been adopted by-laws necessary to begin the process of accreditation. Activities of the Agency are defined by Articles 48, 49 and 50 of the Framework Law.

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, giving recommendations on criteria for licensing of higher education institutions and study programs;
- 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;
- proposing general guidelines and criteria based on which the budget of BiH institutions may be allocated to higher education institutions for scientific research;
adoption of the rules (by-laws are a special category of general acts of lower legal force than the law, varying by name and legal nature), and other acts within its jurisdiction.

Article 49

In the area of accreditation, the Agency is responsible 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\textsuperscript{16}, 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 higher education institutions and study programs, based on 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 compliance 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 Steering Board of the Agency;
- maintaining the 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 ion the Official Gazette of BiH no less than once per year, and no less than twice per year in three widely distributed daily newspapers.

The Article 50 of the Framework Law gives the Agency a statutory authority to issue \textit{Instructions on the form and content of Diploma and Diploma Supplement issued by accredited HEIs}.

4.2 The organizational structure of the Agency

The organizational structure of the Agency is determined by \textit{the Rulebook on Internal Organization} (Figure 1). The work of the Agency is organized under four main organizational sectors, namely:

- Management Cabinet,
- Sector for Development of Higher Education,
- Sector for Quality Assurance and
- Sector for Legal, Personnel, Financial and General Affairs.

\textsuperscript{16} Agency also used a term Panel of experts
A total of 35 jobs were systematized by the Rulebook. The Director of the Agency manages the Agency. Assistant directors chair basic organizational units - Sectors, and heads of departments chair divisions. At the time of drafting this document, the Agency has twenty-two staff members, namely: three appointed persons (the Director and two Deputies), 11 civil servants and 8 employees. The CM BiH at the 74th session, held on February 5th, 2009, gave consent to the Rulebook on Internal Organization of the Agency and at the 91st session, held on June 17th, 2009 to the Agency’s Statute.

The Management of the Agency shall be appointed by the CM BiH following a public competition. The mandate of the Director and Deputies lasts for four years. The Director and Deputies cannot come from the same constituent peoples. For its work and the work of the Agency the Director is responsible to the CM BiH and the SB of the Agency elected by the PA BiH.

The Agency has established a professional body – the Professional board, established for consideration of strategic, principled, and other matters within the competence of the Agency and provision of opinions and proposals to the Director of the Agency and the Steering Board. The Professional board is composed of the Director, Deputy Directors, heads of basic organizational units of the Agency. If necessary, other civil servants in the Agency will be included in the work of the Professional board. The work of this board is defined by the Rulebook of Procedure of the Professional board of the Agency.

The Steering Board rules the Agency and consists of ten members – three from each of the three constituent peoples in BiH and one member from among the others. Members of the SB of the Agency shall be elected by the PA BiH in the public procedure for a term of three years with the possibility of re-election, provided that initial appointment is conducted in stages, so that each year one third of the members comes up for the election or re-election. The SB sessions are regular and irregular, regular sessions are held at least four times a year, and more often if necessary. The SB decides by a majority vote of all members, provided that such a majority includes at least two thirds of the votes of the representatives of each constituent people. The Framework Law provides that the SB constitutes of at least 50% of full university professors. The relationship of the SB and the Agency is closely determined by the Statute of the Agency that the SB of the Agency adopts with the approval of the CM BiH, and the work of the SB is regulated by the Rules of Procedure for the work of SB.

In accordance with the decisions of the CM BiH – the Decision on principles for establishing internal organization of administrative bodies of Bosnia and Herzegovina ("Official Gazette of BiH", No. 30/13) and the Decision on the classification of jobs and criteria for the description of jobs in the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina ("Official Gazette of BiH", No. 30/13) a new Rulebook on Internal Organization of the Agency, is in the process of drafting and it will be sent to the CM BiH for approval.
The appointment of the Agency's Management and of the SB of the Agency is carried out on the basis of open competition and anyone who meets the conditions set can apply for one of them. These appointments are made in accordance with the Law on Ministerial Appointments, the Appointments of the CP BiH and other Appointments in BiH. The procedures of appointment under this Law are based on the principles of lawfulness, quality, independent scrutiny, openness and transparency, and participation in employment. No person who holds a position in a political party can be appointed. The candidates for appointment must not be in conflict of interest that may affect the legality, objectivity and impartiality in carrying out their function. The existence of a conflict of interest shall be checked by the Committee for election in accordance with the Law.
4.3 The jurisdiction of the Steering Board of the Agency

The jurisdiction of the SB of the Agency is determined by the Statue of the Agency in detail:

a) adopts the Statute of the Agency and submits it for approval to the CM BiH;

b) approves the regulations proposed by the Agency of its competence in the development of higher education and quality assurance, as defined in Articles 6 and 7 of this Statute;

c) ensures that the Agency's work shall be in accordance with the responsibilities set out in the FLHE in BiH;

d) ensures that the Agency's work shall be in accordance with the policy of priorities of the CM and the PA BiH in the reform of higher education in BiH;

e) adopts the Agency Work Program for the period of the next calendar year, no later than 31st January of the current year, which regulates in detail the activities, jobs and funding of the Agency;

f) monitors the implementation of the Agency Work Program;

g) rules on appeals against the decision on annulment of accreditation;

h) determines the types of services provided by the Agency and reimbursement of the amount of compensation for services rendered;

i) before 31st March each year adopts the report on the work of the Agency in the previous year to be submitted to the CM BiH;

j) delivers an annual written report to the PA BiH on its work;

k) performs other duties in accordance with the FLHE and the Statute.”

5 THE AGENCY'S ACTIVITIES WITH RESPECT TO QUALITY ASSURANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

In the previous work, the Agency created the organizational, technical and other conditions for the performance of duties and tasks of the Agency in the field of quality assurance as set by the FLHE. The key legislation for the work of the Agency is adopted – the Statute and the Rulebook on Internal Organization, internal acts on managing the Agency, numerous logistical operations were conducted, civil servants and employees were hired, and established contacts with all the CEAs, HEIs and other stakeholders. The Agency, in line with the obligation of the FLHE, made the following documents: ¹⁸

1. Instructions on the form and content of Diploma and Diploma Supplement issued by accredited higher education institutions,

2. Decision on Criteria for selection of national and international experts to provide assessment and conduct quality reviews and give recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs,

3. Decision on the method of forming the Committe for the selection of national and international experts to provide assessment and conduct quality reviews and give recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs,

4. Decision on Criteria for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina,

¹⁸ These documents of the Agency are published in “Official Gazette of BiH” and at the website fo the Agency (http://www.heagov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/Archive.aspx?template_id=52&pageIndex=1), and can be found in Appendix 3 of this SAR titled as The Review of legal acts that the Agency applies in its work.
5. Decision on Amendments to the Decision on Criteria for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. (This Decision determines the criteria for accreditation SP),
6. Decision on norms for determining minimum standards in higher education in BiH,
7. Rulebook on Keeping the State Register of Accredited of Higher Education Institutions in BiH,
8. Instruction for Reviewing the Compliance of Decision on Accreditation with the Minimal Standards in Higher Education and Criteria for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in BiH,
9. Recommendations on criteria and standards to the Ministry of Education and Culture, Cantonal Education Ministries and the Brčko District BiH for establishment and closure of higher education institutions, and for re-structuring of study programs,
10. Recommendations on criteria for the licensing of higher education institutions and study programs in Bosnia and Herzegovina,
11. Decision on Amendments to the Decision on Criteria for selection of national and international experts to provide assessment and conduct quality reviews and give recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs.

All the documents of the Agency were adopted in accordance with the Uniform Rules for Legislative Drafting in the Institutions of BiH, the Rules of consultations in legislative drafting, and the Rules on Amendments to the Rules of consultations in legislative drafting. This implies broad public discussions with stakeholders on drafts of documents drawn up by the Agency.

The roles of the Agency, HEIs, the CEAs and the Committee of experts in the accreditation in BiH are prescribed by the Framework Law. The Agency has after the completion of the procedures for accreditation, until the 10th February 2017 enrolled 27 HEIs in the State Register of accredited HEIs in BiH (20 universities and 7 colleges), while the enrollment of 5 HEIs is still in the procedure. The Agency informs the public on the completed accreditation procedures of HEIs in BiH through its website under the section the List of Accredited HEIs in BiH that is permanently available at the website of the Agency.

Since the establishment of the Agency, it participates as a partner in the implementation of a number of international projects related to quality assurance. The involvement of the Agency on these projects aims to increase the international credibility of the Agency and the transfer of positive experiences and best practices in quality assurance system in BiH. The information on the implementation and results of the projects civil servants regularly exchange at the meetings and update news and informations in the joint folder on the internal network of the Agency.

The Director of the Agency actively participates in the work of the Conference of Ministers of Education in BiH (without the right to participate in making conclusions and recommendations of the Conference), as well as in the work of the RC BiH. The jurisdiction of the Conference of Ministers is defined by the Memorandum on understanding for establishing the Conference of Ministers of Education in BiH ("Official Gazette of BiH", No. 19/08). The Agency also often proposes specific topics for the meetings of these institutions related to quality assurance.

The Agency carries out on-going activities: provides advice on work and development policy to the Ministry of Education and Culture of the RS, Cantonal Ministries and the BD BiH, provides advice and information within its competence to stakeholders, collects data, analyzes, promotes and monitors the implementation of the Agency’s implementing regulations, conducts thematic analysis, organizes numerous thematic meetings, workshops, conferences with stakeholders, and more.

The Agency regularly responds to calls from institutions of higher education in BiH for providing comments on the various reform documents and processes (evaluation of the progress of implementation to the Bologna Process in BiH, identification of priorities for Erasmus+ for BiH, and others), as well as reports annually the MCA BiH on the execution of the FLHE in BiH.

6 THE AGENCY’S QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

The Agency has so far confirmed itself as the leader of the external quality assurance/accreditation in BiH in which also participate: HEIs, the CEAs and the Committees of experts. The diagram of the process of accreditation of HEIs in BiH (Figure 2) shows that in the field of accreditation in accordance with the FLHE the Agency is responsible for:

- appointment of the Committee of experts based on the CEAs' proposal from the list of experts,
- giving recommendations to accreditation of HEIs, that is SPs, based on the opinion of the Committee of experts,
- assessing compliance of decisions on accreditation with established standards and criteria,
- keeping the State Register of accredited HEIs in BiH,
- permanent availability on the website of the List of accredited HEIs and its publication at least once a year in the "Official Gazette of BiH" and at least twice a year in three widely circulated daily newspapers in BiH.

All these phases are further regulated by by-laws of the Agency and in this SAR are described in the standards: 2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose, 2.3 Implementing processes, 2.4 Peer-review experts, 2.5 Criteria for outcomes and 3.3 Independence.

Although the other phases of the accreditation process are under the jurisdiction of RS, Cantons in the FBiH and the BD BiH in which the Agency is not directly involved, the Agency is included in order to improve the process by giving the appropriate advice and recommendations to the CEAs on how to improve processes. However, in spite of everything mentioned slowness of the process steps, which are performed by the individual CEAs, are evident and which can be attributed to personnel shortage in the CEAs, inexperience, as well as to political changes that are also reflected in the work of individual CEAs.

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• The HEI applies the Request for accreditation to the CEA
• The CEA defines with its act the content of the Request for accreditation
• The CEA checks the completeness of the Request for accreditation
• The CEA prescribe the form of the Request
• The SER of HEI is the most important part of the Request
• The CEA check the structure of the SER
• The structure of the SER must be in accordance with the Decision on norms that define minimum standards in higher education in BiH
• The SER must be in one of the languages in BiH and in English
• The CEA define the manner of reply, deadlines for amendments to the Request for accreditation

• The CEAs deliver the completed Request and the Proposal of the Committee of Experts (CE) to the Agency
• The proposed experts must be from the List of Experts
• The Proposal must contain all categories
• The Proposal contains the minimum number of experts from all categories
• Propose CE with respect to a gender component
• The proposed experts must not be in the conflict of interest!
• The definition of the conflict of interest is in the Decision on norms that define minimum standards in higher education in BiH (“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 100/11)

The following are the Agency’s criteria for the selection of proposed experts:
• The absence of conflict of interest. The Agency e-mails the proposed experts the Declaration on the absence of conflict of interest that they fill in and return to the Agency
• Availability and possibility to participate in the Committee, (the Agency checks via e-mail)
• Experience in the internal and external processes of QA
• Participation in trainings
• Experience in projects related to quality assurance
• Promptness in submitting data to the Agency
• Gender representation
• The Agency passes the Decision on the appointment of CE
• The Decision is brought for: each member of the Committee, the CEA, the HEI and the archives of the Agency
• The Decision defines: the composition of the Committee, the rights and obligations of the Committee, referring to the acts of the Agency and the CEA, and the manner of appointment of the Secretary of the Committee in accordance with relevant acts of the CEA.
• The Decision for international expert who does not speak any of the official BiH languages must be in English.
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- The members of the CE agree on terms and schedule of visits.
- The day before the visit the representative of the HEA (the coordinator) and the CEA meet the members of the CE. The representative of the HEA (the coordinator) has a meeting – gives instructions to the CE.
- The Secretary of the CE takes the minutes of the meeting as a rule.
- The CE as a rule brings decisions unanimously, and if not than each member of the CE can give their own opinion.
- The Committee describes the completeness of every criteria in writing: fully completed, substantially completed, partially completed and unfulfilled.
- The Report on external evaluation should be in one of the BiH official language and in English.
- The structure of the Report must be in accordance with the Decision on norms that define minimum standards in HE in BiH.
- The Agency brings the Recommendation on accreditation of the HEI (one copy for: each member of the CE, the CEA, the HEI and the archives of the Agency).
- The Recommendation follows as the outcome of the accreditation.
- The Recommendation describes the completeness of each criteria.
- The Decision is delivered to the CEA in sufficient number of copies prescribed by the CEA.
- The structure of the Decision should make the assessment of compliance of the Decision easier.
- The Decision should in its explanation refer to the Recommendation of the Agency.
- The CEA submit a request of registration of the HEI in the State Register of accredited HEIs in BiH and the compliance assessment to the Agency.
- The Director of the Agency appoints the Committee for the compliance assessment.
- The Committee consists of three civil servants of the Agency.
- The Committee works in accordance with the Instruction on the manners of compliance assessment on accreditation with minimum standards from the field of HE and the accreditation criteria of HEIs in BiH.
- The Committee takes Minutes and gives a proposal for registration of the HEI into the Register to the Director.
- The Director of the Agency passes the Decision on registration of the HEI in the Register.
- The responsible person will register the HEI in the Register.
- The Agency shall inform the CEA on registration within three days upon registration (Article 7, paragraph 3 the Rulebook on the State Register of accredited HEIs).
- The HEI develops action plan of follow-up activities and publishes it on its website.
- The HEI annually creates a report on the implemented activities of the action plan and should publish it on its website.
- The CEA and the Agency survey the implementation of the follow-up activities.

Figure 2 The process of accreditation of HEIs in BiH
7 THE INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE AGENCY

In 2015, the Agency completed The Quality Manual of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance, that the SB of the Agency adopted at the 31st session, held on November 16th, 2015. The purpose of this Manual was to describe the system of quality assurance in the Agency itself. The aim of the Manual is to support constant improvement of the Agency's work (“quality improvement”) and to guarantee equal treatment to all stakeholders in higher education in BiH through transparent procedures (“responsibility”). The Manual in a transparent way describes basic rules of conduct and activities within the Agency, in order to facilitate employees perform daily jobs in accordance with the organizational culture of the Agency. The Manual also serves as a source of information for newcomers to the Agency.

The procedures from the Manual are to be applied by all employees and external associates hired by the Agency. It is the duty of each employee to whom the procedure applies to learn it and act in a proper manner.

In the first part of the Manual the official status of the Agency is described, and in the second part the mentioned descriptions of processes are divided into three groups, namely:

- management processes,
- core processes and
- support processes.

Each process is described through a series of procedures that constitute it, and this includes a description of objectives, indicators, responsible persons and reference documentation. For each process the stages of planning, implementation, verification/evaluation and process improvement are presented. The Map of the Process is presented in Figure 3.

The Agency’s Quality Policy is an integral part of the Manual. Quality Policy is published at the Agency’s website (http://hea.gov.ba/o-nama/?id=7469). The Committee for Quality Assurance of the Agency is responsible for activities of the internal quality assurance of the Agency and the preparation of self-assessment report on an annual basis in accordance with the II and III groups of ESG is responsible, whose work is regulated by the Rules of Procedure of the Committee. The Article 3 of this Rules also stipulates that when necessary the Committee considers and conducts improvement of internal quality assurance of the Agency in accordance with other standards of quality, for which it estimates that are of the Agency’s interest.

The Agency, within the implementation of the Program for Stengthening of Public Institutions in BiH that is implemented in BiH by GIZ since November 10th, 2016, introduces a quality management model CAF (Common Assessment Framework (www.eipa.eu/files/File/CAF/CAF_2013.pdf). The analysis of the work of these institutions involved in the Program and the proposed model of quality system (CAF or ISO) for some institutions was conducted by a consulting agency Sigma, that proposed the Agency to introduce CAF 2013. The CAF belongs to a category of tools for total quality management (TQM), that the public sector developed for public sector, and as the inspiration served the Model of excellence of the European fondation for quality management (EFQM®). It is based on the premise that excellent results in the area of organizational performance, citizens/users, people

21 GIZ- Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
22 Desicion of appointment working group for implementation CAF no. 06-34-6-693-1/16 od 10.11.2106.g.
and society are achieved through strategy based on leadership and planning, as well as with the help of people in organization, partnerships, resources and processes. The CAF is available in the public domain, free of charge and is offered as an easy to use tool to assist public sector organizations across Europe in using quality management techniques in order to improve the work. About 3,000 public institutions in Europe benefit from CAF.

**Figure 3** The map of Process in the Agency
8 INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE AGENCY

The on-going task of the Agency is to present BiH in international organizations for quality in higher education. The Agency is a full member of:

- International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE- www.inqaahe.org), since December 2009, and

As stated earlier, the Agency is also an affiliate member of the ENQA since February 2010.

In addition to the above mentioned associations, the Agency has established bilateral cooperation with regional and international agencies for quality assurance. That cooperation is especially intense with regional agencies, that it shares mutual historical heritage and that meet the same difficulties in their work, but also with other European agencies for quality assurance.

The Agency signed the Memorandum on understanding with the:

- Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Slovenia (NAKVIS/SQAA)
- Agency for Science and Higher Education in Croatia (AZVO).

Agreements on cooperation are signed with the following agencies:

- the Agency for Evaluation Baden-Wurttemberg (EVALAG), Germany;
- the National Center for Public Accreditation (NCPA), Russia;
- the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Ranking (IAAR), Kazakhstan;
- the Center for Quality Evaluation in Higher Education (SKVC), Vilnius, Lithuania;
- the Agency for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (AAQ) Switzerland;
- the Agency for Accreditation in Higher Education (APAAL), Albania.

The mentioned memoranda express intention and will for mutual cooperation, and they serve as frameworks for initiation of special bilateral activities. Memorandums are available on the web site of Agency23.

The representative of the Agency, the then Director, was a member of the Working Group for Mapping the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (http://www.hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/?id=2801). The Agency was also represented in the Executive Committee CEENQA-e, where the Deputy Director of the Agency was one of seven members. Agency hosted the General Assembly and Annual Workshop of CEENQA 11 – 12 May 2012. (http://hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/Default.aspx?id=3558 ).

International cooperation which was implemented by the Agency, including the implementation of the EU IPA Twinning Project "Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Quality Assurance (2013-2015)", as well as previous direct implementation of the international project of the Austrian Development

23 http://www.hea.gov.ba/Aktivnosti/medjunarodna_saradnja/Archive.aspx?template_id=52&pageIndex=1
Agency, cooperation with the World University Service Austria (WUS Austria) and the World University Service in BiH (SUS BiH), participation in consortia for the implementation of many Tempus projects, and other reform processes in addition to improvement of quality assurance and development, participation has also a great importance in the promotion of higher education in BiH, but also in recognition of the creation of the Agency and the quality of higher education in BiH.

The ability to independently administer through projects for European funding available, the Agency used twice. Once at the very beginning of its operation, when in the course of two and a half years implemented the project entitled "Support to the establishment and functioning, the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance, 2009-2011" (ADA) Project, aimed at the establishment and effective functioning of the Agency, and strengthening awareness about the importance of higher education and quality assurance in BiH.

The IPA Twinning Project *Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Quality Assurance* was implemented two years later, in the period from 2013 to 2015, in cooperation with the Austrian Agency for Quality Assurance (AQ Austria). Given that directly before the start of the project started the first institutional accreditation processes in BiH, the activities of this project were primarily focused on the support of the Agency on the road to full membership in the ENQA. The ESG was the starting document for all project activities that in addition to representatives of the Agency involved experts, competent education authorities, higher education institutions and students. The current situation of quality assurance in relation to the ESG was analyzed, and based on identified, recommendations for further action were given. The specificity of the Twinning Project is an intensive cooperation with European counterparts in the field of quality assurance throughout the entire duration of the project. Recommendations of the project are available on the website of the Agency [http://hea.gov.ba/projekti/zavr_pro/ipa_twininng/tw_qa/Default.aspx?id=4436](http://hea.gov.ba/projekti/zavr_pro/ipa_twininng/tw_qa/Default.aspx?id=4436).

The Agency is one of the founders and a full member of the Regional Platform for Cooperation and Research in Higher Education, the non-profit association of higher education institutions, government and parliamentary committees with headquarters in Dubrovnik, Croatia. The Regional Platform was established to promote, develop and improve higher education and scientific research in the enlarged region of the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia). The Agency operates under the Platform with the aim of international cooperation, promotion of regional policy in the field of higher education and research, and implementation of ESG in the EHEA ([http://projects.tempus.ac.rs/attachments/project_resource/1321/2855_REGIONAL_ROADMAP.pdf](http://projects.tempus.ac.rs/attachments/project_resource/1321/2855_REGIONAL_ROADMAP.pdf)).

Thanks to the implementation of a number of international activities and the transfer of expert knowledge, the Agency institutionally strengthened and matured, using and learning the relevant examples from the European practice. The Agency has decided that in future work, communication and advocacy of reform processes remain important factors of the reform of higher education in BiH in order to become a representative part of the EHEA.
9 COMPLIANCE WITH EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES (III)

9.1 ESG 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

**Standard:** Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities as defined in Part 2 of the ESG on a regular basis. They should have clear and explicit goals and objectives that are part of their publicly available mission statement. These should translate into the daily work of the agency. Agencies should ensure the involvement of stakeholders in their governance and work.

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The Agency constantly carries out all activities within its competence and external quality assurance requirements according to requirements of the second group of ESG. The Agency has established the mission, vision and values that guide its daily work, which are publicly available at the Agency’s website (www.hea.gov.ba/o-nama/Misija/?id=486). The Agency in 2014 as a part of the Program of Implementation of Strengthening Public Institutions in BiH developed the Strategy of Development of the Agency for the period 2014-2018. (www.hea.gov.ba/Aktivnosti/Strategije/?id=5608). The Strategy established the strategic goals derived from the mission, vision and competence of the Agency.

In this document are also presented all stakeholders of the Agency, which have been previously defined by the internal act of the Agency the Instruction for the implementation of the rules for making consultations in drafting legal regulations of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance code 06-1-02-1-957/12 from January 11th, 2102.

Given that, at the end of 2014, the CM BiH adopted the Decision on the procedure for mid-term planning, monitoring and reporting in institutions of BiH, the Agency developed in 2015 the Mid-term work plan of the Agency for the period 2016-2018. The Mid-Term Plan of the Agency was adopted by the Agency’s Director’s Decision24 and published on the website of the Agency. (http://www.hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/Srednjorocni%20plan%20rada%20ARVOOK%202016-2018.pdf)

The Mid-Term Work Plan set out mid-term objective, two specific goals and two programs that contain a variety of projects and activities, whose daily implementation contributes to the mid-term and specific objectives fulfillment. The Mid-Term Objective corresponds to the mission and organizational structure of the Agency and refers to the support that the Agency provides to higher education in BiH through improvement of policy and development of the quality of education in BiH.

Specific objectives set by the Mid-Term Plan of the Agency for the period 2016 -2018 are:

- Giving systemic advice and recommendations in accordance with the mandate of the Agency and
- Strengthening of internal and external quality assurance systems in higher education in BiH and the recognizability of the Agency.

The first specific objective includes activities carried out by the Agency in the field of higher education development. The program, which is aimed at the fulfillment of the first specific objective includes projects and activities related to the implementation of thematic research and analysis, organization of activities with key partners and provision of advice and information to stakeholders in accordance

24 (Decision No. SPD 04-06-1-732-3/15)
with the mandate of the Agency. The second specific objective is related to the activities in the field of accreditation of HEIs and SPs.

The full membership in the ENQA and inclusion on the list of EQAR have been identified as key activities within the second specific objective, all in order to strengthen the Agency's visibility at the international and national level and to strengthen the trust of the public and partners in the work of the Agency.

The preparation of the Mid-Term Plan of the Agency shall involve the stakeholders in a way that the preliminary draft of the Mid-Term Plan of the Agency will be sent to stakeholders for public consultation, and then a draft will be sent to the Ministry of Finance and Treasury of BiH (hereinafter: MFT BiH) for an opinion. Only then the head of the institution adopts the Mid-Term Plan of the Agency. After completion of the public consultation with stakeholders and the submission of the Mid-Term Plan of the Agency to the MFT BiH, the Agency was delivered the Opinion of the MFT BiH<sup>25</sup> on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015, that the Mid-Term Work Plan for the period 2016-2018 was prepared in accordance with the methodological guidelines. In the training on mid-term planning, held in February 2016, the Mid-Term Plan of the Agency was presented by the MFT BiH and the Directorate for Economic Planning as a positive example of creating a good and coherent plan.

The annual work plan of the Agency, which is aligned with the Mid-Term, is also referred to public consultation, where stakeholders can influence the planned activities and objectives of the Agency, ensuring trust between the Agency and stakeholders, that is the general public.

The stakeholders of the Agency, in addition to involvement in the adoption of the strategic objectives of the Agency and in the drafting of legal regulations of the Agency, are also involved in the work of the Committee for the selection of a list of experts. The Agency, as a rule, annually announces Public invitation for the selection of experts, in which the Agency notices and calls many stakeholders so that their representatives apply to the invitation as experts. When the invitation closes, the Director of the Agency pursuant to Article 48 line 2 of the FLHE appoints the Committee for the selection of a list of experts. The Committee consists of five members, four of which are representatives of the various stakeholders. The Committee consists of one representative of:

1. the RC BiH,
2. one cantonal ministry of education in the FBiH,
3. Ministry of Education and Culture of the RS,
4. the Department for education of the Government of the BD BiH, and
5. the Agency.

Because of the constitutional order of BiH and the jurisdiction of the RS entity, 10 cantons in the FBiH and the Brčko District of BiH over higher education, the Agency has a number of stakeholders (12) in the CEA and it realizes the process of external quality assurance. Through various events (workshops, round tables, ...) the Agency together with the CEA promotes cooperation, exchange of knowledge and experience, and maintains the trust confirmed through the evaluation of these events.

In order to maintain the purpose of external quality assurance process in the EHEA, the Agency in order to increase the professional expertise includes international experts in the following ways:

<sup>25</sup> (Opinion No. 13-22-1-5090-96/15)
as experts in the Committee of experts on the External Quality Assurance (130 foreign experts from a total of 446 on the List of experts; 32 foreign experts were appointed in the Committee of experts),

- in the making individual acts of the Agency\textsuperscript{26} and

- invitation to participate in workshops with the CEAs and HEIs in trainings of national experts where invited foreign experts present and share their experiences.\textsuperscript{27}

9.2 ESG 3.2 Official status

**Standard:** Agencies should have an established legal basis and should be formally recognised as quality assurance agencies by competent public authorities.

**HEA COMPLIANCE**

The Agency has been established by Article 47 of the Framework Law as an independent administrative organization with competencies as defined in Articles 48, 49 and 50, and the organization, administration, management and financing of the Agency are prescribed in Articles 51 and 52 of the Framework Law. The Decision of the BiH Council of Ministers determined the seat of the Agency to be in Banja Luka and the beginning of work to be on March 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2008, and gave consent to the Rulebook on Internal Organization of the Agency on February 5\textsuperscript{th}, 2009.

The Agency in its work applies the laws and by-laws governing organization, jurisdiction and functioning of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In carrying out its responsibilities in the field of accreditation of HEIs and SPs, the Agency implemented the Framework Law, the implementing regulations issued by the Agency on the basis of the Framework Law and the Law on Administrative Procedure, which apply the BiH institutions. The Agency applies the Law on Administrative Procedure for all administrative matters in stages of the accreditation process under the jurisdiction of the Agency, for which the Framework Law and the implementing regulations adopted on the basis of the Framework Law have not defined a specific administrative procedure. Figure 2 shows deadlines, phases of procedures and activities that participants in the process of accreditation carry out.

In the area of accreditation, competence and activities of the Agency are prescribed by the FLHE, and are, accordingly, implemented by the Agency. The general public has the opportunity to become acquainted with the outcomes of accreditation. They are transparent and published on the Agency’s website.

The Article 53, paragraph (1) of the FLHE in BiH stipulates that the *accredited higher education institution is authorized to award academic degrees and diplomas specified in its accreditation certificate*. From the above legal provisions results mandatory accreditation because non-accredited HEIs are not authorized to award academic degrees and diplomas.

Although the FLHE is clear in its labeling, in practice it is not yet. In fact, there are still examples of HEIs that issue diplomas to their graduates even though they did not start the process of accreditation. In order to avoid such a situation, it is necessary that the CEAs in their regulations incorporate such a

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\textsuperscript{26} www.heagov.ba/Aktuelnosti/Default.aspx?id=829

\textsuperscript{27} http://hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/?id=2215
provision, which stipulates the FLHE, and in accordance with the conclusions adopted at the workshop with the CEAs from July 7th, 2016. Also, in order to eliminate the possibilities for action that is inconsistent with the FLHE, the Agency’s letter dated from September 20th, 2016, and published on the web (http://www.hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/?id=7416) urged the inspection bodies responsible for education to determine which licensed HEIs operate in their area of competence for more than three years, and which are not accredited, and to inform the Agency about their findings.

On the other hand, Article 54 of the FLHE stipulates that "The competent national authorities and other bodies and organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the purpose of employment or public office, to recognize only those degrees and diplomas awarded by accredited higher education institutions." In terms of implementation of this Article, the Civil Service Agency BiH and the Agency have held a meeting on January 19th, 2016, at which it was concluded that the document of the Civil Service Agency BiH Instructions on the process of recruitment of civil servants which is under preparation be included by the provision of Article 54 of the FLHE, and that the Agency is at their disposal for further support in this regard.

9.3 ESG 3.3 Independence

**Standard:** Agencies should be independent and act autonomously. They should have full responsibility for their operations and the outcomes of those operations without third party influence.

**HEA COMPLIANCE**

The Agency has been established by the Framework Law, which was adopted by the PA BiH, as an independent administrative organization with rights and obligations prescribed by the mentioned Law. The Agency operates independently from its founder the PA BiH. This authority of the State level of government is not the founder of any HEIs in BiH and there is no obligation for their funding, and, therefore, there is no interest towards any institution in BiH either as the founder, or as a financier, or as a controller of their work, and, thus, has no interest to exert influence on the work of the Agency.

The founders of all public HEIs in BiH are administrative bodies of the entities of RS and cantons of the FBiH, which finance them, control their work through inspections within their jurisdiction, as well as through its members in the boards of these institutions. The founders of private HEIs in the entity of RS, cantons in the FBiH and the BD BiH are not administrative bodies of the entities, cantons and districts that prescribe the requirements for the establishment, licensing and closure of HEIs and control their work activities by inspections within their jurisdiction.

The founders of the HEIs at levels of the entity RS, cantons in the FBiH and the BD BiH cannot impact on the work of the Agency, because they are not founders of the Agency, and the Agency does not work in accordance with their regulations. The relationship of the upper level (state) of authority and the lower level (entities, cantons, district) is regulated by the Law on administration in BiH (“Official Gazette of BiH”, No.32/02 and 102/09). Given that the Agency is formed according to the agreement of lower levels (BiH entities) of authority, a careful attention was paid that its jurisdiction given by FLHE does not create space for the impact on the CEAs, or any conflict of interest through the activities of external evaluation, the adoption of documents or by giving advice on the policy of the CEAs.
Article 2, paragraph (4) of the Statute of the Agency stipulates that "in the activities of the external quality assurance the Agency operates independently within their jurisdiction". Also, it is stated in the Decision on norms for determining minimal standards in higher education in BiH, that "external quality assurance should be organized so that decisions on the quality are adopted independently of the education authorities, political structures and higher education institution that is the subject to external quality assurance, avoiding any conflict of interest."

Everyday work of the Agency shall be made in compliance with the principles stipulated in Article 2 of the Rulebook on Internal Organization, and those are the principles of: legality, transparency, openness, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness, and professional impartiality. The organizational independence of the Agency is reflected in the above facts.

The operational independence and the independence of formal outcomes is reflected in the below-mentioned facts that describe processes in the field of external quality assurance/accreditation conducted by the Agency:

- The Agency carries out appointment of a committee of experts on the basis of proposals of the CEAs regarding the selection of experts from the established list of experts. To ensure the independence and avoid any impact of CEA on the proposed experts, with prior consultation with the IPA Twinning experts, on December 19th, 2013, the Agency sent a letter No. 05-33-1-995-1/13 to all CEAs, in which it advised them to incorporate into their rulebook on accreditation procedures, a provision or a paragraph by which they propose three times the number of experts than the minimum required, and the Agency to make a choice of the proposed 15 experts and appoint the Committee consisting of mostly five experts for universities, and four for colleges. This Agency’s recommendation was included in cantonal Rulebooks on the accreditation process, while the Agency for Accreditation of HEIs in RS (hereinafter: HEAARS) submitted a proposal of the minimal prescribed number of experts to be appointed to the Committee.

The Agency appoints committees of experts in accordance with the Instruction on Appointment of the Committee of experts for accreditation in higher education (http://www.hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/?id=7009). If the Agency has received a proposal of the CEAs with the proposed number of experts larger than the minimal prescribed, the Agency then makes a selection, taking into account the following criteria for the selection of experts from the Instruction:

a) absence of conflict of interest,
b) the availability and opportunities to participate in the Committee's work,
c) experience in the processes of internal and external quality assurance,
d) experience in the quality assurance project,
e) participation in training,
f) promptness in the delivery of data to the Agency,
g) gender equality.

The checking of the (non)-existence of conflict of interest shall perform the CEAs and Agency. The CEAs submit to the Agency evidence from HEIs that proposed experts are not in conflict of interest along with a proposal of experts. Also, the Agency seeks from the proposed experts a proof that there is no conflict of interest to the respective HEI.
The Decision on appointment of the committee of experts states that the Committee is obliged to comply with the Decision on norms and criteria for accreditation of HEIs in BiH, from which it follows that members of the committee should make all decisions guided by mentioned documents and expertise, regardless of their organization while working as a member of the committee appointed by the Agency.

- The Agency issues the **Recommendation on Accreditation** to the CEAs based on the report of the Committee of experts. The Agency at this stage of the accreditation process operates independently and autonomously. The recommendation of the Proposal is issued by the Committee for issuing recommendations. The Committee consists of three permanent and three alternate members (civil servants from the Agency), appointed by the Director. The Committee works in accordance with the internal act of the *Instruction on the manner of giving recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs* and delivers the proposed recommendations to the Director of the Agency for consideration and confirmation.

- **The Assessment of Compliance of the Decision on Accreditation** issued by the CEAs based on the Recommendation of the Agency shall be based on the *Instruction on the manner of evaluation of compliance of the accreditation decision with the minimal standards of higher education and criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (No. 06-02-1-766/from November 4th, 2011), according to which this part of the work is conducted by an internal committee of compliance of accreditation assessment appointed by the Director of the Agency. The Instruction describes the process of evaluating the compliance of the decision of accreditation and action in the case of determining that it is not in line with the standards in the field of higher education and criteria for accreditation. In the case of non-compliance, the SB of the Agency may, as the last resort, decide that the decision was not coordinated and that HEIs or SPs cannot be listed in the Register. Thus, this step in the accreditation process is essentially performed by the Agency autonomously and independently. The registration in the State Register of accredited HEIs is done in accordance with the Rulebook on Keeping the State Register of Accredited HEIs in BiH. (See a detailed description of the standard in 2.3. Implementing processes).

The Agency is responsible for a public competition for the selection of national and international experts for quality assessment and audit and giving recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs. For the purpose of transparency and independence of the process, the Agency adopted the Rulebook on the method of implementation of public competition which further regulates this process. This procedure is carried out by the Committee, consisting of five members, one representative from: the RC BiH, one cantonal ministry, the Ministry of Education and Culture of RS, Department of Education of the BD BiH, and a representative of the Agency. Such composition of the Committee composed of representatives of the various stakeholders certainly achieves independence of a process. The result of the work is the Committee's list of experts who meet the requirements of the contest. This List must be verified by all CEAs by giving approval, upon review of the same.
9.4 ESG 3.4 Thematic analysis

**Standard:** Agencies should regularly publish reports that describe and analyse the general findings of their external quality assurance activities.

**HEA COMPLIANCE**

Since its inception, the Agency has conducted activities making specific analysis. Using appropriate methodologies data on higher education respondents and stakeholders were collected and processed, and conducted analysis and provided information to certain groups in order to improve their and the Agency's work in the field of higher education and quality assurance. Below is a list of important analysis that have been conducted by sectors:

The Sector for Development of Higher Education:

- **The Analysis of the application of the Bologna goals and fulfillment of the applicable minimal standards and norms in higher education at all licensed HEIs in BiH in the academic year 2009/10.** The analysis presents the results of research, conducted critical evaluation and identified weaknesses, and given recommendations and measures to improve the implementation of the Bologna goals and fulfillment of the applicable minimal standards and norms. The results of the research and analysis are presented in a workshop with the CEAs and HEIs in BiH the *Minimal standards and norms in higher education in BiH* held in Sarajevo on July 8th–9th, 2010.

- In 2012, the **Analysis of the existing legislative framework in BiH regarding the issuance of the Diploma Supplement, and the Analysis of compliance with the EU model.** The results of the analysis and recommendations for improvements are made individually for each CEA and presented on April 19th, 2012 in Banja Luka at the workshop "The role of education authorities in the process of accreditation of higher education institutions in BiH".

- In 2012, the research was conducted by the survey method of HEIs and prepared **Analysis of the fulfillment of the criteria for accreditation of HEIs in BiH.** The aim of this activity was to encourage HEIs to the higher level of fulfillment of the criteria for accreditation. At the same time the research was conducted on the current state of implementation of the Bologna Process on the same subjects, the HEIs in BiH. The pooled analysis was accepted by the Professional board of the Agency in January 2013.

- In 2013, the **Analysis of the current situation in the implementation of the Bologna goals in higher education in BiH was conducted, in conjunction with the survey results from 2012, with a focus on the Bologna goal - the Mobility of students, academic, research and administrative staff.** The Analysis was accepted by the Professional board and the SB of the Agency.

- In 2016, the **Analysis of the accreditation process in terms of higher education institutions in BiH was conducted with the aim of making recommendations for the improvement and advancement of the accreditation process.** The analysis presents the results of the survey of higher education institutions that have been completed or are in the process of accreditation.

The Sector for Quality Assurance did the following in the past period:

- In February 2012, the **Analysis of the selection process of a list of national and international experts** for the previous year was conducted, and shortcomings are identified in the
documents related to the selection of experts, after which they amended these in certain segments of the election process, such as the manner of selection, application on public call, content lists, obligations of experts, how to update the list of experts and termination of status of experts.

- In February 2013, the Analysis of a list of national and international experts in terms of representation of experts, by category, scientific/artistic field and the like.
- In January 2014, the Analysis of the process of accreditation of HEIs in BiH for 2013 was realized, which was presented at the Professional board of the Agency and the SB of the Agency.
- In June 2014, the Analysis of the CEAs Rulebook on Procedure of Accreditation of HEIs, in BiH was conducted, which was presented at the IPA Twinning workshop with the CEAs, held in Banja Luka, on June 16th, 2014. The presented recommendations are incorporated in the Rulebooks on Procedure of accreditation of HEIs and the SPs by the majority of the CEAs in June 2014.
- In May 2016, the Analysis of the current accreditation process with recommendations for improving the process of external quality assurance in accordance with the revised ESG was conducted and adopted by the SB of the Agency and presented at the Round Table titled “Improving the process of accreditation of higher education institutions in BiH” with the EAs, held on July 7th, 2016.

The Agency published some of the analysis on its website under section Activities, subfolder Thematic analysis.  

Through evaluation questionnaires the Agency interviewed stakeholders to propose topics that could be the subject of analysis. The Agency is aware of the importance and necessity of making thematic analysis as the research findings (recommendations, tips and information) are used as inputs for the improvement of education policy, strategic planning and development of higher education and quality assurance at all levels.

In this regard, the Agency will continue in the coming period to collect data for analysis, publish them on the website and monitor the implementation of recommendations and advice and the effects achieved and on the basis of feedback improve processes and recommendations.

Thematic analysis is planned for the Mid-Term Work Plan and Annual Work Program of the Agency. The Agency also continuously collects data and keeps the internal database for relevant activities - giving advice on work and development policy to the Ministry of RS, cantonal ministries of the FBiH and the BD BiH and provide advice and information within its competence to stakeholders. These databases are the following: the existing legislative framework, contact persons from the CEAs and HEIs in BiH, the establishment of HEIs in BiH, the procedures for issuing licenses/permits for the performance of SP, issuing the decision on provisional accreditation, the legislative framework related to minimal standards and norms in higher education, study programs, which are implemented at all three cycles of study at HEIs in BiH, dislocated departments in BiH, etc.

http://hea.gov.ba/Aktivnosti/tematske-analize/Archive.aspx?template_id=52&pageIndex=1
9.5 ESG 3.5 Resources

**Standard:** Agencies should have adequate and appropriate resources, both human and financial, to carry out their work.

**HEA COMPLIANCE**

The budget of the Agency is an integral part of the budget of BiH institutions to be determined by the Law on Budget of BiH institutions and international obligations for the year. The budget provides funds for the salaries and allowances of employees of the Agency, material costs (travel expenses, utility bills, office supplies, maintenance of equipment and property necessary services), and capital expenditures for the purchase of necessary equipment.

The development of three-year and annual budget of the Agency is carried out in accordance with the Law on Financing of Institutions of BiH. The Agency shall prepare the Budget Framework Document (financial plan) for a three-year period, which includes a review of spending priorities for a specified period after the programed activities of the Agency from the Framework Law established authority. The Budget Framework Document presents a preliminary draft of a budget for the coming year and contains the upper limit of expenditure that the Agency, upon their ratification by the BiH Council of Ministers, shall apply when preparing the annual request for funds. The review of the Agency's budget for the last five years is given in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>The amount of the Agency's budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>KM 1,065,000 (EUR 544,526)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>KM 1,117,000 (EUR 571,113)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>KM 1,133,000 (EUR 579,294)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>KM 1,020,000 (EUR 521,518)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>KM 1,013,000 (EUR 517,939)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that the budget of the Agency is relatively stable and that it had a growing tendency in the period 2013-2015. Reducing the budget in the last two years is the result of the reduction of certain expenses, primarily, rental of office space because the Agency was assigned with private space, as well as compensation for work in the SB of the Agency, in accordance with the amendment of legislation at the State level. The mentioned reduction had no impact on the implementation of activities of the Agency’s mandate.

The Agency has also used funds from the EU pre-accession funds and donations for the improvement of individual activities through specific projects. These funds have largely contributed to the strengthening of the institutional capacity of the Agency, both material and human. These funds have the greatest significance in the establishment of the Agency.

The Framework Law on Higher Education in BiH provides the possibility of independent funding of the Agency but, however, the Agency has not developed a system of this type of financing.

The Agency is at the present stage, after more than seven years of work, sufficiently institutionally constructed to be independent from international sources and funds, relying on funds provided from the budget of BiH institutions to perform the tasks that are entrusted by the mandate.
The organizational structure of the Agency is determined by the Rulebook on Internal Organization. The Rulebook systematized 35 jobs, and the Agency currently has 22 employed, out of which three appointees (Director and two Deputies) and 19 staff members (11 civil servants and 8 employees). One of the limiting factors when it comes to filling vacancies, are restrictive employment policies at the level of institutions of BiH, because each new employment must be approved by special decision of the BiH Council of Ministers. It is evident that the actual number of employees is less than planned (63% of the estimated total number of systematized positions), which presents the limiting factor for the Agency. However, the Agency organizes its work through rational use of existing human capacity, as well as through the possibility of hiring external consultants for all jobs that do not have the necessary personnel within the Agency and in that manner seeks to overcome the above restriction.

Most employees of the Agency are highly educated, including two PhDs and five masters. On the development of higher education and quality assurance works a total of nine employees who through various forms of training and participation in projects in the field of higher education and quality assurance meet the requirements of continuous improvement trends in this area and participate in the implementation of the external quality assurance in higher education in BiH.

The Agency regularly conducts evaluation of the work of civil servants and employees. The work of civil servants is evaluated twice a year, while employees are assessed on an annual basis, whereby the accomplishment of work goals by defined criteria are evaluated, and in order to encourage quality and professional performance of duties and tasks, that is to motivate civil servants to constantly improve their professional knowledge and skills.

Civil servants attend free trainings for civil servants organized by the Civil Service Agency of BiH. The areas in which trainings are organized are: introductory trainings for new staff, management trainings, specialist trainings, foreign languages, advanced IT trainings, trainings in the area of law, social skills in the workplace, etc. Employees are trained according to the needs of the application of new practices in performance of duties. Employee training is carried out within the Agency and in collaboration with other institutions in charge of the work for which there is a need for training and which successfully apply the necessary practice.

Civil servants and employees of the Agency use information and communication technologies to support all business processes. All workstations are equipped in accordance with the prescribed standards in the institutions of BiH. The Agency currently has 37 computers, two copy machines, 22 printers, 18 laptops and IP phone system, that are bound by network and server by the end of 2016, the Agency with the aim of continuous renewal of the existing equipment purchased new IT equipment (12 desk computers and two laptops). The Agency currently has the equipment for a conference room for 20-30 persons (projector, LCD screen, wireless Internet), which can be used for meetings, presentations, Skype conferences and training of foreign experts, but in a newly location there is currently no adequate room where that equipment could be put in operation. The Agency addressed the competent institutions to purchase additional space, as this would solve this problem, and solve the problem of space for new employees that the Agency needs because of the workload considering that about 60% of the estimated number of systematization is currently employed in the Agency.

The Agency currently has no full-time specialist in information technology, whose task would be to monitor user needs and make the necessary changes and upgrade information systems. The aforementioned drawback is partially solved by hiring a company that performs maintenance of all IT equipment in the Agency. Since the changes in this area are fast and frequent, each year a part of the
funds required for the renewal of obsolete equipment in the Agency and improvement of existing ones is provided from the budget.

The Agency, now in new premises, due to lack of space, does not have an adequate library. Publications, magazines and professional literature in the field of quality assurance and development of higher education is currently placed in offices. In the future, the Agency should pay more attention to this problem, given that every year some funds are planned for procurement of the necessary professional literature.

9.6 ESG 3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct

Standard: Agencies should have in place processes for internal quality assurance related to defining, assuring and enhancing the quality and integrity of their activities.

HEA COMPLIANCE

As mentioned earlier, the Agency established the Committee for Quality Assurance of the Agency as a permanent body within the Agency conducting internal quality assurance activities of the Agency and preparing the SAR of the Agency on an annual basis in accordance with the II and III group of ESG. Strengthening internal quality assurance and professional conduct in the Agency will contribute to the implementation of quality management model CAF, which is ongoing.

The Agency has adopted the Agency’s Quality Manual, which specifies in a clear way elementary rules of behavior and activity within the Agency and provides support to the continuous improvement of the Agency. The Manual serves as a source of necessary information for newcomers in the Agency. The Manual describes the management processes, the core processes and support processes, through a series of stages/procedures that make it. All employees and external associates shall be obliged to apply the procedures set out in the Manual.

An important document regulating the rules and principles of professional conduct of all employees is the Code of civil servants in the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina29. This Code contains the rules and principles of good conduct of civil servants towards citizens and their interrelations, as well as introduction of behavior of public officials that citizens are entitled to expect. Professional conduct of civil servants and employees of the Agency is subject to semi-annual assessment in accordance with the regulations of the Agency for Civil Service of BiH.

The Agency as an administrative organization is required to, in their daily work, apply positive legal regulations relating to the area within which it operates. Therefore, in addition to the statutory rules governing jurisdiction and responsibilities of the Agency, there are a number of internal regulations made in the field of:

- strategic planning,
- status issues, governance and management of the Agency,
- financial operations, accounting and procurement,
- quality assurance in higher education,

29 ("Official Gazette of BiH", No. 49/13 from June 24th, 2013)
Legal acts adopted by the Agency and which, in the area of its activity are applied, are publicly available on the Agency’s website in the section Documents/subsection Documents of the Agency and Internal Acts, and are immediately available to civil servants and employees via internal common internet base which contains the acts. The review of the legal acts that the Agency applies in the area of its activity is presented in the Appendix 3 of the SAR.

The Agency as a state institution has legally defined obligations in terms of reporting. Thus, the annual reports on activities are submitted to the BiH Council of Ministers for consideration and adoption.

Financial operations of the Agency are subject to an annual review of the Office for Audit of Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Agency has had a positive audit opinions. Recommendations from the report on the financial audit are continuously conducted within the Agency in order to strengthen the system of internal controls and the efficiency and effectiveness of work. The Committee on Finance and Budget of the PA BiH each year considers reports on the financial audit. All reports of the Agency are published and are available on the Agency’s website.

The Agency implements activities on development of financial management and control system (FMC) and risk management, in accordance with the Law on Financing of Institutions of BiH and by-laws. The FMC is based on components of the COSO model (COSO-Committee of Sponsoring Organizations ), namely: control environment, risk management, control activities, information and communication, monitoring and evaluation of the system. The Agency has appointed a working group and a person responsible for the establishment and development of the FMC system. It also adopted the Action Plan for the establishment and development of the FMC system. Also, the annual report on the financial management and control are to be submitted to the Central Harmonization Unit of the MFT BiH.

An important aspect of the internal quality assurance is the fight against corruption. The Agency has following obligations under the Strategy for the Fight against Corruption BiH and the Action Plan for Implementing the Strategy drafted the Plan for Combating Corruption and the Integrity Plan, which are available on the Agency’s website. The Agency regularly reports the Agency for prevention of corruption and coordination of the fight against corruption on implementation of the Plan for Combating Corruption and the Integrity Plan.

The Agency has in its previous work commissioned foreign experts, either through direct agreement or through a partnership participation in international projects, and, thus, received a number of feedback, advice and recommendations for improvement of internal work and processes. In the construction of internal quality assurance and accountability in external procedures, the Agency in the future should work on a continuous implementation of expert opinions and recommendations.

In the previous work, the Agency has collected feedback on the satisfaction of external stakeholders in connection with the implementation of thematic workshops, through evaluation questionnaires, and information exchange in direct contact. The collected feedback was used for correction and improvement of the work processes quality of the Agency.

http://www.hea.gov.ba/Aktivnosti/plan_int_akc_plan/Archive.aspx?template_id=52&pageIndex=1
An important element of the internal quality assurance is also internal communication. In 2015, the Agency has conducted an analysis on satisfaction during the information process and on quality of internal communication. It can be concluded from the results that internal communication within the Agency is generally good, with the best marks for horizontal communication - communication with colleagues, which is extremely important as it represents a good basis for the work of the Agency, but also the improvement of the ascending and descending communication. The worst evaluation mark received a part that referred to "Satisfaction with feedback." In this part, improvement of ascending and descending communication was proposed, or communication between bosses and employees. Further improvement of internal communication and building responsibilities are segments that will be worked on in the future, including all the ways and forms of internal communication within the Agency, and with the aim of facilitating the exchange of business information, and improving the working process management.

9.7 ESG 3.7 Cyclical external review of agencies

**Standard:** Agencies should undergo an external review at least once every five years in order to demonstrate their compliance with the ESG.

**HEA COMPLIANCE**

In the period before external evaluation by the ENQA panel, the Agency was in a certain way evaluated in 2012 and 2013 through international projects.

- **In 2012,** the Agency passed the first external evaluation in accordance with the ESG as a pilot external evaluation by independent experts within the framework of the Tempus project *Strengthening Quality Assurance System within HEIs and Western Balkans Support of National and Regional Planning - CUBRIK* ([http://www.cubrik.eu/content/drafting-self-assessment-report-pilot-visit-act-43-53](http://www.cubrik.eu/content/drafting-self-assessment-report-pilot-visit-act-43-53)).

For the purpose, the Agency made the SAR of the Agency, which reflected all the standards of Chapter ESG 2 and ESG 3 ([http://www.cubrik.eu/system/files/SEI%20HEA.pdf](http://www.cubrik.eu/system/files/SEI%20HEA.pdf)). The purpose of the activities, the pilot of the external evaluation, was to develop the Agency’s capacity and strengthen human resources in terms of training and preparation for access to the ENQA after the fulfillment of basic preconditions for full membership status - implementation of an external quality assurance for a period of at least two years.

At the time when the procedure of independent evaluation was performed, there was no completed accreditation procedure in BiH, so that this external evaluation of the Agency carried out through aforementioned Tempus project is seen as the ex-ante evaluation.

- **In 2013,** within the framework of the IPA Twinning Project, in the Agency, in the period from 9th–20th December, with the IPA Twinning experts were held two workshops on the analysis of compliance of the work and regulations of the Agency with the ESG31 as follows:

31 [http://hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/?id=4539](http://hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/?id=4539)
- from the 9th–13th December, the Analysis of compliance of the work and regulations of the Agency with ESG II,
- from the 16th–20th December, the Analysis of compliance of the work and regulations of the Agency with ESG III.

This process of external analysis compared to the previous, through the CUBRIK project, enabled the identification of open questions and areas for improvement. Namely, the experience that the Agency acquired during the two years of active participation in the accreditation process, provided a critical review of the entire process that served as the basis for active participation with the aim of improving the process.
10 COMPLIANCE WITH EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES (II)

10.1 ESG 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance

**Standard:** External quality assurance should address the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance described in Part 1 of the ESG.

**HEA COMPLIANCE**

The Agency has created a legal framework and conditions for effective external quality assurance, which recognizes and supports the activities of HEIs as a carrier of internal quality assurance. The Agency, in consultation with colleagues from foreign agencies and after a public debate with all the HEIs and CEAs in BiH adopted:

- *Decision on criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in BiH* (criteria), and
- *Decision on norms for determining minimal standards in higher education in BiH* (standards).

In preparing both these acts, and in particular the Criteria, the Agency strictly paid attention to their compliance with the ESG. The compliance criteria with ESG is given in Table 3.

**Table 3. the compliance criteria with ESG**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESG I group (2005)</th>
<th>Criteria for accreditation of HEIs in BiH (&quot;Official Gazette of BiH No. 75/10 and 44/13)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Policy and procedures for quality assurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Development and strategy of HEIs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Management, internal quality assurance and culture of quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Procedures for quality assurance of SPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Assessment of students:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Procedures for assessment of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Quality assurance of teaching staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Human resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Learning resources and student support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Quality of physical resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Information systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Information systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Public information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Public presentation of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>International cooperation ³²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The HEIs govern internal quality assurance in accordance with the Criteria for accreditation of HEIs in BiH, while committees of experts evaluate the fulfillment of these criteria in the process of external quality assurance. The Decision on norms is a document that consists of two parts: the standards for internal and standards for external quality assurance in BiH. In the second part of this document are set out standards relating to the process of external quality assurance, and that take into account

³²Note: The Agency consciously developed a criterion the International Cooperation in order to increase the internationalization of BiH higher education and which is in line with its vision.
internal quality assurance. This is explicitly defined in the standard the Method and areas of external control of quality assurance, which clearly states that "The external quality assurance should give a clear answer to achievement of the Standards for internal quality assurance and fulfillment of the criteria for accreditation."

All of the nine criteria for accreditation of HEIs according to which the accreditation of 27 HEIs in BiH was performed, define the need of HEIs to have internal regulations and procedures that refer to the standards from the first group of ESG from quality policy, quality assurance of study programs, students, human and physical resources, etc., and all with the aim of establishing a functional system of internal quality assurance. The identification of legal acts which regulate certain processes in internal quality assurance according to the criteria is listed in Table 4.

Table 4: The necessary legal documents defined by the criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Criteria for accreditation of HEIs in BiH (&quot;Official Gazette of BiH No. 75/10 and 44/13)</th>
<th>The necessary legal documents and procedure defined by the criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Development and strategy of HEIs</td>
<td>Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Procedures for monitoring the fulfillment of plans and the realization of strategic objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Management, internal quality assurance and culture of quality</td>
<td>Established and adopted policies and procedures for internal quality assurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Organizational structure and other legal acts which formalized an effective organizational and management structure (Statute, Rules of Procedure, Rulebooks, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Procedures for quality assurance of SPs</td>
<td>Procedures for proposing, adopting, monitoring and implementation, and review and innovation of study programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Procedures for assessment of students</td>
<td>Procedures for a fair, transparent and consistent assessment of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Procedure for mobility and recognition of previous titles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Human resources</td>
<td>Development policy of the teaching staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>procedure for appointment and promotion of the teaching staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Quality of physical resources</td>
<td>Quality policy of physical resources (procedure of functioning of the library and information resources, a distance learning ....)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Information systems</td>
<td>Procedures of information systems, procedures for archives in digital form, Intranet and the like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Public presentation of information</td>
<td>Policy of communication with the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>International cooperation</td>
<td>Procedure to support international activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Procedure for the mobility of students and the teaching staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strategy of international cooperation, the development plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal plan for development of institutional body for international cooperation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33 Source: The professional paper of a group of authors “Formalistic Approach in Evaluation of Compliance of Criteria as a Key Problem in the Work of the Quality Assurance Committee of experts” 8th Scientific and technical Gathering with an International Participation ”KVALITET 2013”, Neum, BiH.
In order for committees of experts to give in the external quality assurance a clear answer to achievement of standards for internal quality assurance and compliance with the criteria for accreditation, committees of experts should take into account not only the formal existence of these acts listed in Table 4, but the results of their practical application obligatorily. In this regard, the Agency provides support to experts in more coherent and more consistent evaluation of their eligibility in a manner that, in accordance with the Manual for the training of experts, it organizes theoretical and practical training of experts (see ESG 2.4 Peer-review of experts), and appointed committees of experts submits in an electronic form:

- Guide for internal and external evaluation of higher education institutions in BiH (http://hea.gov.ba/projekti/sus/Vodic-za-internu-i-eksternu-evaluaciju-visokoskolskih-ustanova Bs.pdf) and
- annexes of the Manual for training of experts, which was developed in cooperation with international experts within the Twinning Project.

In the preparation of the Guide participated three experts from the List of experts with significant experience in quality assurance (two representatives of the academic community in BiH, and one representative of the economy and practice), and two representatives of the Agency.

The significance of the Guidelines, in addition to offering support to experts in a more coherent and more consistent evaluation of their eligibility, is reflected in the fact that the first part of the Guidelines provides guidance to a HEI in establishing internal quality assurance under the requirements of these criteria.

In order to support HEIs in establishing a functional internal quality assurance, the Agency organized through the IPA Twinning Project three workshops in Banja Luka for managers on the quality of HEI.

In order to support HEIs in the internal quality assurance, the Agency organized through the IPA Twinning Project three workshops in Banja Luka for managers on the quality of HEI, as follows:

1. "How to strengthen quality assurance systems at HEIs“ on 17th-18th September 2014 http://hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/?id=5369
3. The third workshop was held on 12th March 2015 and it was a kind of summary of the previous workshops and it dealt with specific issues of interest to certain HEIs. Participants of the workshop discussed the experiences after a study visit to higher education institutions in Vienna with the aim of exchanging experience in the field of quality assurance (hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/Default.aspx?id=5943).

In the middle of the last year, the Agency has amended the Manual for training of experts with an attachment the Methodology of Writing the Report that will be of assistance to the experts in order to assess the fulfillment of the criteria better and write reports of better quality.

Considering that in May 2015 a revised ESG were adopted, the Agency in order to improve and simplify the criteria for accreditation of HEIs in BiH and align them with revised ESG (2015), as part of the Twinning Partnership, with the participation of international experts, carried out the consolidation of the Criteria for accreditation of HEIs in BiH. After a public consultation process was implemented, these Criteria were adopted by the Steering Board at its 35th session, held on November 23rd, 2016,
and are published in Official Gazette of BiH No. 96/16 in December 2016. The Agency has also prepared a new version of *the Methodology of Writing the Report* according to the newly adopted criteria. The table below shows correlation between individual ESG standards I group (2015) and actual criteria for accreditation HEIs and SPs in BiH.

Table 5: ESG standards I group (2015) and corresponding national criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Policy for quality assurance 1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4; 1.5; 1.6</td>
<td>1.1; 1.2; 1.3</td>
<td>1.1; 1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Design and approval of programmes 1.1; 1.2</td>
<td>1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4; 1.5; 1.6</td>
<td>1.2; 1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment 1.1; 1.2</td>
<td>1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4; 1.5; 1.6; 1.7</td>
<td>1.6; 5.5i; 5.6; 6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Student admission, progression, recognition and certification 1.1; 1.2; 1.3</td>
<td>1.1; 1.2; 1.3</td>
<td>2.2; 2.3; 5.1; 5.2; 5.3; 5.4; 5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Teaching staff 1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4; 1.5</td>
<td>1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4</td>
<td>3.1; 3.2; 3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Learning resources and student support 1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4; 1.5</td>
<td>1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4; 1.5</td>
<td>1.3; 2.1; 4.1; 4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Information management 1.1; 1.2; 1.3</td>
<td>1.1; 1.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Public information 1.1; 1.2; 1.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes 1.1; 1.2; 1.3</td>
<td>1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4</td>
<td>1.7; 3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cyclical external quality assurance 1.1</td>
<td>In Decision on norms is defined that “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.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Mobility of academic staff and students 34 10.1; 10.2; 10.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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34 Note: The Agency consciously developed a criterion the Mobility of academic staff and students in order to increase the internationalization of BiH higher education and which is in line with its vision.
The Agency, as a key player in external quality assurance, in many ways provides support to HEIs to improve internal quality assurance. As a specific example, immediately after the adoption of the revised ESG, in June 2015 a representative of the Agency held three workshops in Sarajevo, Tuzla and Bihać for the management and QA offices of HEIs and the EAs in BiH on the topic: The impact of the revised ESG on quality assurance in BiH.

10.2 ESG 2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose

**Standard:** External quality assurance should be defined and designed specifically to ensure its fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for it, while taking into account relevant regulations. Stakeholders should be involved in its design and continuous improvement.

**HEA COMPLIANCE**

The Agency's defines in the Decision on norms that external quality assurance in BiH is to be carried out for the purpose of accreditation of higher education institutions, that is study programs, and for the purpose of improving efficiency of internal system of quality assurance. The same act defines that external quality assurance should be given a clear answer to the fulfillment of the criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions and achievement of standards for internal quality assurance.

The Agency has, since its establishment until today, in the exercise of legal powers in the development of higher education and quality assurance adopted documents constituting the legal framework for the implementation of the accreditation process, and, thus, the goals and the implementation of external quality assurance have been defined.

All documents within its competence, the Agency adopted in accordance with the procedure prescribed by legislation adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH and the CM BiH, which defines the obligation of inclusion of stakeholders in adoption of documents. The Agency, with the aim of more efficient and more precise involvement of stakeholders, passed an internal act the *Instruction for the implementation of the rules for consultations in legislative drafting regulations of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance* (http://www.hea.gov.ba/Aktivnosti/javne_kons/?id=3809). The Instruction listed in detail procedures of public consultation, as well as the role and importance of stakeholders in the process of decision-making documents. Primary stakeholders which the Agency addresses are HEIs and the CEAs. After drafting a certain document, the Agency puts that document on a website with the invitation to all stakeholders to submit their comments and objections to the text of the document with the aim of its improvement. In addition to this formal part, prescribed by the rules for public consultation, the practice in the work of the Agency is also the organization of workshops - public hearings with invited stakeholders. Received comments and suggestions, after consideration and evaluation of their justifiability, the Agency shall incorporate into the document with the aim of its improvement, or it will reject them. In both cases, the Agency shall notify the proposer of suggestions or proposals on the grounds of acceptance or rejection. The Agency shall apply the same procedure both while creating a new document and while amending and improving the quality of existing documents.

All documents that have been adopted in accordance with the powers of the Agency and in accordance with the prescribed procedure and published in the "Official Gazette of BiH" are also published on the website of the Agency and are listed in Annex No. 3 of the SAR. (www.hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/Archive.aspx?template_id=52&pageIndex=1),

After the analysis of so far completed accreditation procedures and feedback from stakeholders, the Agency has initiated the procedure of amendment and improvement of its documents in the field of quality assurance, with the particular aim of their harmonization with the ESG 2015. The Agency has also made recommendations and suggestions to competent education authorities to harmonize and improve their regulations in accordance with the ESG 2015.

The Decision on norms provides that the external quality assurance of higher education institutions should take place in a certain time interval in accordance with the relevant regulations, given that quality assurance is an ongoing process.

All accredited higher education institutions are obtained with the reports of committees of experts recommendations for the improvement of their work. All reports of committees of experts with recommendation are available on web site of the Agency. The higher education institution is required to develop an action plan of follow-up activities in order to implement recommendations for improving internal quality. The Agency’s defines in the Decision on norms that the accredited HEI makes an action plan of follow-up activities and annually report on activities undertaken to implement the action plan and publish it on its website. In this way HEIs are able to demonstrate the effectiveness of their own internal quality assurance to the public.

Results/outcomes of the previous cycle of institutional accreditation with recommendations for improvement shall be taken into account and considered in the process of re-accreditation, and a special emphasis will be put on continuous improvement of HEIs in accordance with the ESG 2015.

One of the aims of the Agency is to inform the public about the quality of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The result of the process of accreditation is a formal decision on the outcome of the process and:

- accreditation of higher education institutions
- conditional accreditation or sending a letter of expectations
- refusal of accreditation with recommendations for improvement.

The commitment of the Agency to continue the improvement of the quality, and, thus, in that sense it has in the Mid-Term Plan for the period 2017-2019 defined a specific objective to strengthen internal and external quality assurance in higher education in BiH.

In the future period, the objective of the Agency is the realization of all the necessary preconditions for the start of the accreditation process of study programs in BiH, and to ensure and improve consistency and uniformity of procedures that it uses in the process. Also, the objective is to systematically improve the knowledge and skills of trained experts for the next processes and challenges that are before the Agency.
The Agency aims to achieve coherence and consistency in the implementation of all procedures that it carries out. In this sense, the Quality Manual was developed, as well as a set of internal documents that have significantly improved the accreditation process and ensure its coherence and consistency.

The Agency currently has no act that would regulate the issue of possible cross-border accreditation.

10.3 ESG 2.3 Implementing processes

**Standard:** External quality assurance processes should be reliable, useful, pre-defined, implemented consistently and published. They include:

- a self-assessment or equivalent;
- an external assessment normally including a site visit;
- a report resulting from the external assessment;
- a consistent follow-up.

**HEA COMPLIANCE**

The implementing process of external quality assurance in BiH in accordance with the Decision on norms is structured according to the model of 4 steps involving:

1. A report prepared by the higher education institutions through self-evaluation (self-evaluation report),
2. A visit of the Committee of experts to a higher education institution,
3. A report on the external evaluation published by the competent education authorities, and
4. Follow-up activities carried out by the higher education institution according to the recommendations of the Committee's report on the external evaluation.

- **Self-evaluation**

Self-evaluation is a process that is carried out periodically by the HEIs based on the Criteria for accreditation of HEIs. The process of self-evaluation results in a report of self-evaluation. According to the Decision on norms, the self-evaluation report must be written in one of the official languages in BiH and English and must also follow the structure prescribed in the Decision on norms.

- **A visit of the Committee of experts to a higher education institution**

A composition of the Committee of experts has set also out the Decision on norms and is minimally composed of one representative of each of the following four categories of experts:

1. a representative of the academic community in BiH;
2. a representative of economy and practice in BiH;
3. a student;
4. an international expert.

The Agency appoints committees of experts on the basis of the CEAs proposals. In the first appointment procedures the CEAs were giving suggestions with a minimal prescribed number of experts, and the role of the Agency in this regard was to confirm proposed experts by issuing a decision
on the appointment of committees of experts, after it determined that all four categories were represented and that all proposed experts were from the set list of experts.

With the aim to achieve a higher degree of independence in the appointment of experts and improvement of the process, the Agency has made the Recommendation to all the CEAs that during the nomination of a committee of experts propose three times larger number of experts from the minimum prescribed by the Decision on norms. In this way it is possible that the Agency taking into account the specific criteria of the *Instruction on the appointment of the Committee of experts for accreditation of higher education institutions* decides on the final composition of the Committee of experts. All the CEAs in the cantons have complied with this recommendation of the Agency.

The HEAARS, which in the process of accreditation submits a proposal of experts for the HEIs from the RS, instead of the RS Ministry of Education proposes a minimum prescribed number of experts, and the Agency in this case only checks:

- whether the proposed experts are on the set List of experts,
- whether the proposal contains representatives from all four categories of experts,
- whether the HEAARS provided an evidence that the experts have no conflict of interest.

In terms of supporting the work of the appointed committee of experts before and during the visit to the HEIs, due to the complexity of the education system in BiH and divided jurisdiction of the various participants in the accreditation process, there are different approaches in the RS and cantons in the FBiH. For the HEIs located on the territory of the RS, the job of a secretary/coordinator of a committee of experts is conducted by a person from the HEAARS staff appointed by the HEAARS. For the HEIs in cantons in the FBiH, a civil servant from the Agency is appointed for a coordinator of a committee of experts. The role of a coordinator, which was formalized through the Instruction on the appointment of the committee of experts for accreditation of the HEIs, is to provide members of a committee of experts with all the necessary information and documents for the implementation of accreditation, as well as to provide them with assistance in understanding their role and purpose of the process. Another peculiarity of the process is the role of a secretary of a committee of experts. That role in the procedure of accreditation of the HEIs in the RS performs, as already stated a representative of the HEAARS, while in the process of accreditation of the HEIs in cantons in the FBiH a secretary is one of the members of a committee of experts. The choice of a secretary is regulated by the cantonal regulations on accreditation.

- **The report as the result of the external evaluation**

The Report of the Committee of experts, according to the Decision on norms must be written in one of the official languages in BiH and English, and the structure of the Report of the Committee of experts is prescribed in the same document. The Agency issues Recommendations on accreditation to the competent education authorities on the basis of the Report of the Committee of experts in accordance with this *Instruction on the manner of giving recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs*.

Based on recommendations the CEAs issue the Decision on accreditation of the HEIs. The next step in the procedure of external quality assurance is the assessment of compliance of the Decision on
accreditation with norms and criteria for accreditation. The purpose of the compliance assessment is to connect activities of the various participants in the process of accreditation, quality assurance of the accreditation process, and a provision of mechanisms for providing feedback. The compliance procedure is regulated by the Instruction for reviewing the compliance of decision on accreditation with minimal standards in higher education and criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to the Instruction mentioned the compliance assessment conducts a three-member committee for the review of compliance, which is, upon receipt of the Decision on accreditation, appointed by the Director of the Agency from the ranks of civil servants.

If the outcome is positive compliance assessment, the Director issues the Decision on registration in the State Register of accredited HEIs in BiH, based on the minutes of the Committee on compliance assessment. If the outcome is negative, the Agency requires from the CEAs a correction of formal aspects in the Decision on the accreditation and/or that the Decision is based on an adequate assessment of the Report of the Committee of experts and the Recommendations of the Agency. After receiving the new Decision from the CEAs, the Agency shall conduct the compliance assessment again, and if the Decision is positive, the Decision on registration in the State Register will be issued. If the assessment is once again negative, the issue shall be referred to the SB of the Agency. So far the Agency has not had a case of negative compliance assessment and, therefore, no appeal (see section 4.7 ESG 2.7 Complaints and appeals).

The accreditation process is completed by listing the HEIs in the State Register. The registration in the State Register is regulated by the Rulebook on Keeping the State Register (www.hea.gov.ba/Dokumenti/dokumenti_agencije/?id=3051). A civil servant from the Sector for Quality Assurance is responsible for entering data on accredited HEIs in the Register. Within three days from the date of registration in the State Register of HEIs, the Agency informs the CEAs that it adopted the Decision on accreditation of entry in the State Register.

- **Follow-up activities**

The Agency in respect of subsequent activities of HEIs after completing the accreditation process in the Decision on norms prescribed that:

- **the HEI upon receipt of the accreditation decision makes an action plan of follow-up activities with a time frame and specific executors to implement the recommendations to improve internal quality from the Committee’s report, and publish it on its website.**
- **the HEI annually prepares a report on activities undertaken to implement the action plan, which should include activities undertaken, degree of implementation, as well as an indication of possible deviations from the plan and the circumstances that caused a discrepancy. The Report on the activities of HEI should be published on its website.**

The existing Rulebooks on Accreditation of the CEAs regulate this issue further in detail, so that the obligation of HEIs is that after receiving the Decision on accreditation, on the basis of recommendations for improvement of the internal quality system from the Committee’s report, make an action plan of follow-up activities with concrete timeframe and executors of activities, and to publish it on their website. However, there are differences in terms of who monitors the implementation of the Action Plan. According to the Canton Sarajevo and Tuzla Canton’s regulations,
it is stipulated that the implementation of the Action Plan is monitored by the Agency. The Una-Sana and Central Bosnia Cantons predict that the CEA do it in cooperation with the Agency. But, the Agency did not carry out activities that the cantonal authorities prescribed it, because lower body acts are not binding on the authority of a higher order. However, there are also cases of the Rulebook on accreditation of the Zenica-Doboj Canton, where it is not prescribed which organ monitors the implementation of the Action Plans at all.

Also, in order to monitor the implementation of the Action Plan, the HEIs annually prepare a report on activities undertaken to implement the Action Plan, which should include activities undertaken, degree of implementation, as well as deviations from the Action Plan, and the circumstances for which they occurred. Annual reports on the activities of HEIs are delivered to the CEA and it is required to publish them on their websites. Not all CEA prescribed whether there are certain consequences in the event that an institution fails to prepare the Annual report on the activities of the Action Plan (the Canton Sarajevo, the Central Bosnia and Zenica-Doboj Canton), while some predict that if the institution fails to elaborate, or fails to submit annual report, the CEA can *ex officio* and/or on the recommendation of the Agency, withdraw the Decision on accreditation. The very method of monitoring the subsequent activities of HEI’s is, for now, something differently regulated in the RS compared to the FBiH cantons, where it is provided that 18 months after the completion of the accreditation process, the audit be organized by appointed committee and on the basis of it the Report would be adopted. Based on the original Report, taking into account remarks and suggestions of the HEIs and stakeholders, the HEAARS and HEIs agree concrete tasks and projects of improvement with deadlines for their implementation. Consequences for the HEIs in the RS which are found not to implement the activities envisaged by the Action Plan with the aim of improvement of the quality of their institution, lead to the annulment of the Decision on accreditation and the procedure of deletion from the State Registry. In cases where HEIs complete accreditation by obtaining conditional accreditation/a letter of expectations, the period of implementation of the recommendations necessary to overcome the identified shortcomings is laid down by the CEA rules and lasts one year.

The Agency regarding subsequent activities is committed to the idea that their partners should be given support in the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee of experts. Having examined the annual progress reports published on the website of the HEIs and the corresponding recommendations, the Agency exercises the option to choose topics that will be interesting to some or most of the HEIs, and in this regard the Agency with its expertise supports HEIs in the final step of accreditation process - the subsequent activities.

The Agency carried out a survey and analysis of the current situation in the implementation of procedures of subsequent activities at accredited higher education institutions in BiH, as part of the Activities 3 under the Action Plan for the application for ENQA. The data were collected at specific activities that higher education institutions and competent education authorities conducted in the process of follow-up activities. The data collection was carried out in the period from January 5th, 2016 to January 15th, 2016, by a letter addressed to the 18 previously accredited HEIs and their six authorized CEA.

The analysis of the received information was conducted, the base of the existing rulebooks of accreditation made and drafted a proposal of detailed recommendations at all stages of the
implementation process of follow-up activities, with proposed solutions and sanctions with the aim of improving the process, defined activities executors and time frames.

The proposal of recommendations was presented to competent education authorities at the Conference "The improvement of the accreditation process of higher education institutions in BiH", held in Banja Luka on 7th July 2016 in the organization of the Agency.

Based on the comments, suggestions and discussions final recommendations are made and submitted to the Conference of Ministers of Education of BiH, together with other recommendations arising from the Analysis of the 2011-2016 Accreditation Process. The same recommendations were incorporated into the new version of the Agency's Decision on norms, which is in the approval process and where the role of all participants is clearly defined, as shown below:

### PARTICIPANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the HEIs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- prepare an action plan after the receipt of the decision on accreditation</td>
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<tr>
<td>- annual report of the CEAs on the activities undertaken to implement the action plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the CEAs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- adopt the Rulebooks of accreditation of HEIs and SP at its area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- analyzes reports of the Committee of experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- monitors the implementation of action plans of accredited HEIs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- organizes workshops on selected topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- gives advice on work and development policy of the CEAs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 10.4 ESG 2.4 Peer-review experts

**Standard:** External quality assurance should be carried out by groups of external experts that include (a) student member(s).

**HEA COMPLIANCE**

In 2009, the Agency began its work on the List of national and international experts adopting the Decision on criteria for selection of national and international experts to provide assessment and conduct quality reviews and give recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to the Decision national and international experts are:

- a representative of the academic community in BiH;
- a representative of economy and practice in BiH;
- a student;
- an international expert

Representatives of all four categories of experts are selected on the List through a public call, that is published at least once a year, and if necessary several times, in three large circulation daily newspapers whose distribution is done on the entire territory of BiH and on the Agency's website.
The Agency shall submit information on the announced public tender to other Agencies in the EHEA, student unions in BiH, chambers of commerce and other stakeholders, and all with the aim to motivate the participation of a large number of experts in the Public Call.

Until now there were three public calls realized in 2010, 2013 and 2015. Currently, there are 446 experts from all four categories on the List. The Criteria for selection of experts are laid down in the Decision on criteria for selection of national and international experts. In order to efficiently regulate the issue of selection of experts from all categories during the publication and implementation of the public call, and due to the need to more closely regulate the manner of termination of the status of expert on the List, the amendment of the said Decision was made. With the same objective, the Rulebook on the manner of conducting a public competition for election of national and international experts for quality assessment and audit and giving recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs was adopted.

When the public call closes, the Director of the Agency pursuant to Article 48 line 2 of the FLHE appoints the Committee for the selection of a list of experts. The Committee consists of one representative: the RC BiH, one cantonal ministry of education in the FBiH, Ministry of Education and Culture of the RS, the Department for education the Government of the BD BiH, and the Agency. After the Committee for the selection of national and international experts analyzes all received applications and draws up a final List of experts, the List goes to the approval of the SB of the Agency and to adoption to all the CEAs in BiH. After obtaining approval, the List is published on the Agency’s website (http://hea.gov.ba/kvalitet/lista_eksperata/Archive.aspx?template_id=52&pageIndex=1).

The Agency twice per year updates the List of experts and checks if there is a change in the contact details of experts or if there is a change at the professional level. Should there be any change in data content from the established List of experts, the Agency shall immediately inform all the CEAs in BiH.

According to the Decision on amendments to the Decision on criteria for selection of national and international experts, experts are required to attend all forms of education to be organized by the Agency in cooperation with the CEAs.

According to the Framework Law, the Agency shall appoint the Committee of experts on the proposal of the CEAs, (see section 4.3 ESG 2.3 Implementing processes). One of the criteria for selection, if the proposal for the appointment contains more than the minimal required number of experts, is the presence of experts in the training courses organized by the Agency.

The first cycle of training was held after the first call for the selection of experts, i.e. after the release of the first List of experts in 2010/2011. During 2010/2011 14 workshops were organized and during which 228 experts were trained. The former concept of training consisted of theoretical and practical trainings. The theoretical part of the training (4 workshops) were held and organized within the Tempus ESABIH Project, and the Agency implemented 10 workshops for practical training independently in five BiH cities. During theoretical trainings, the following topics were presented to experts: the Bologna Process, the ESG, the Accreditation Model in Belgium, the Criteria for Accreditation of HEIs and SPs in BiH.

Practical trainings were organized in a way that the Agency delivered to experts SER of an imaginary HEI written by the representatives of the Agency’s QA Sector. Experts analyzed the SER and e-mailed to the Agency preliminary assessment criteria, recommendations for improvement and a list of potential questions that were used for discussion during the simulation of the Panel. The Agency then organized a simulation of the Panel’s work and a discussion in which 4 to 5 experts from different...
categories "acted" as the Committee, and representatives of the Agency "acted" as certain target groups of HEIs (management, the QA Department, the Self-evaluation Team, students...).

From 5th-7th February 2014, the Agency, at its headquarter with the help of experts from Germany, Romania and Italy, also carried out a training of a certain number of experts from the List of experts for participation in the pilot accreditation of eight doctoral study programs at the third cycle at public universities in BiH within the framework of Tempus Project activities "The introduction of quality assurance in doctoral studies ". The Project Coordinator was the Faculty of Medicine, University of Heidelberg, and BiH partners were the WUS Austria, and representatives of the eight public universities, the Ministry of Education and Culture of the RS and the Agency.

During the Project, "Criteria and indicators for internal and external quality assurance in doctoral studies" were developed that are incorporated in the draft of the Criteria for accreditation of SP in BiH which are currently at the stage of adoption (http://hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/?id=4674).

In order to establish a systematic approach to training of experts, the Agency held the second cycle of trainings in May and July 2015 as part of the IPA Twinning Project in cooperation with international experts. As in the previous round, trainings were not organized for international experts, due to financial reasons. The experts who have not participated in trainings held in 2010/2011 were invited to these trainings, as well as experts who were included on the List in 2013. In the second cycle, a total of 45 experts were trained. The training program included the following topics:

1. the Criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina,
2. the Decision on norms for determining minimum standards in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina,
3. the Regulations on the procedure and timetable of accreditation defined by the Agency and the EAs,
4. the Schedule of a visit to a higher education institution,
5. the Analysis of the self-evaluation report of a HEI (by groups of 2 to 3 criteria applied),
6. the Writing of the Report of the Committee (2-3 criteria) for each group (Other criteria subsequently are delivered by e-mail.)

The Agency planned to provide training in the second half of 2016, but the planned trainings were not held. This was the result of two reasons. Firstly, a large delay in the publication of the final List of candidates who have successfully passed the competition procedure for delayed granting of the consent of certain education authorities in BiH on the List before its publication. In order to solve this problem with the aim of ensuring transparency and independence, and in particular the acceleration of the process, the Agency adopted the Rulebook on the manner of conducting the public competition which regulates in detail the procedure that was adopted by the SB at its 35th session, held on 23rd November 2016, and entered into force by publishing in the Official Gazette of BiH 9/17. The second reason for the delay is that the SB’s consent to the amendment to the Criteria for accreditation was given at the 35th session, held on 23rd November 2016, and because in contact with experts (60 of experts who passed the last competition) it was estimated that an extremely small number of experts would participate in trainings organized in December 2016, so they are prolonged for year. Training sessions were postponed for March and May this year, according to the established program and schedule: Banjaluka, March 21st, 2017 and May 23rd, 2017 and Sarajevo in March 23rd, 2017 and May 25th, 2017 with the following topics:
Legal Framework in BiH and the System of Higher Education in BiH
Accreditation in BiH; terminology and procedures; participants in the process; their roles and responsibilities
the Criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions/Application of the Criteria and experts write the Report on external evaluation
Professional conduct during accreditation
The SER Analysis/Group work
Simulation of a visit to a HEI
Feedback
Reporting Phase/Roles
Feedback
the Criteria for accreditation of study programs
Conclusions and completion of training

It is planned to develop a set of documents for international experts that will be sent to them following their inclusion in the List of experts, as well as a possible organization of training through Skype or webinar. This is also provided within the Manual for the training of experts.

The Agency has, while reading and analyzing reports on the external evaluation of 2013 and 2014, found insufficient training of experts and a great need for a systemic approach to organize regular trainings and trainings of experts. Therefore, in 2015, the Agency has finalized the Manual for training of experts which has also been developed as part of the IPA Twinning Project and in cooperation with international experts. The Manual consists of two parts:

- the first part is theoretical and includes the types of training (preparatory meeting and general training) with guidance and materials that are needed for organization of the training of experts, and
- the second part consists of annexes. As annexes to the Manual were placed all documents, forms and diagrams that are of use to the Agency's staff who deal with organization of trainings of experts and experts in the course of their preparation, visits to HEIs and writing reports on external evaluation.

In order to support the committees of experts during their preparation for the visit to HEIs, especially when taken into account the fact that trainings of experts from 2011 to 2015 were not maintained, the Agency has introduced the practice of holding preparatory meetings the day/evening before the scheduled visit to the higher education institution in the cantons in the FBiH. At the preparatory meetings a representative of the CEAs is present, from the canton in charge of the higher education institution that is the subject of accreditation. The practice of holding preparatory meetings, the Agency plans to continue in the future, and the exact agenda of topics that need to be discussed during these meetings is developed. In the RS representatives of the HEAARS hold preparatory meetings with the HEI that is the subject of accreditation, and in the BD BiH the practice has not yet been established due to the already mentioned situation where the Department of Education has not established the necessary acts for the accreditation of HEIs in their area of jurisdiction.
When it comes to the participation of international experts, out of 32 so far appointed committees only in 6 committees were recruited and deployed international experts who were not from the countries of former Yugoslavia, and: two from Austria and one from Germany, Belgium, Hungary and Romania each. The predominant proportion of international experts who took part in committees is from Croatia and Serbia, and to a lesser extent from Slovenia and Montenegro. According to the FLHE experts are proposed by the CEA, the Agency should make a recommendation to the CEA in the next cycle of accreditation (2018) that they favor proposition of international experts who come from countries whose universities are ranked high in the rankings of universities.

On the occasion of the International Right to Know Day, the Agency organized Doors Open Day which was held on 29th September 2015 at the premises of the Agency and was intended for the student population with the aim of informing and educating students about the tasks and activities of the Agency in quality assurance in higher education. A special emphasis was placed on the role of students in the process of accreditation of the HEIs in BiH, as well as on raising awareness of the importance of the active role of students in these processes as experts on the List of experts of the Agency (http://hea.gov.ba/Aktuelnosti/Default.aspx?id=6561).

The event titled "The role of students in the accreditation process" brought together representatives of student organizations from Banja Luka, Sarajevo, Zenica, Mostar and Tuzla, as well as representatives of civil society, the association Akademac.

10.5 ESG 2.5 Criteria for outcomes

**Standard:** Any outcomes or judgements made as the result of external quality assurance should be based on explicit and published criteria that are applied consistently, irrespective of whether the process leads to a formal decision.

**HEA COMPLIANCE**

The HEIs should entirely or substantially fulfill the criteria of the Decision on criteria for accreditation of the HEIs in BiH in order to demonstrate that they are credibly engaged in educational activity. The criteria for accreditation of HEIs are the result of intensive work of the Agency and extensive consultations with representatives of the academic community, all the CEA in BiH and the European experts in the field of quality assurance engaged through projects of the Council of Europe and the European Commission "Strengthening Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina III", as well as Austrian Development Agency, the WUS Austria, the SUS BiH and Tempus projects.

The criteria for accreditation of SPs have been developed within the Tempus ESABIH and EQADE projects, within which were not only developed but also implemented in the pilot accreditation of 33 SPs at public universities in BiH on the I and II cycle studies (ESAB) and in the pilot accreditation of 8 SPs in public universities in BiH on the III study cycle (EQADE). Criteria for study programme accreditation entered into force at the beginning of 2013. However, since programme accreditation in BiH wasn’t realized yet, those Criteria were never used. Due to the revision of the ESG, these Criteria were also revised, went through a public consultation procedure, and finally adopted by the SB of the Agency on its 36th session, held on 16th February 2017. Criteria will enter into force after publishing in the Official Gazette BiH, that will follow soon.
In order to harmonize the criteria for accreditation of the HEIs in BH with the ESG (2015), the Agency, as described in section 4.1. ESG 2.1. Consideration of internal quality assurance, timely revised and consolidated the existing criteria for accreditation of the HEIs in BiH.

Experts appointed to the Committee of experts during their visit to the HEIs analyze and give a final opinion on the application of criteria and standards for internal quality assurance at the respective institution. The Committee of experts is bound to give recommendations on improvement of the work of the HEI according to each of the criteria for accreditation, and the HEI is obliged to draw up procedures for follow-up activities according to which it will work to meet the recommendations of the external report on the accreditation. The final decision on the outcome of the accreditation the Committee of experts delivers on the basis of demonstrated compliance with the criteria. The method of assessment criteria, as well as the formation of a decision on the outcome of accreditation are precisely identified in a document the Decision on norms, namely:

“The Committee assesses descriptively the fulfillment of each criterion using the following terms:

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

The opinion on the outcome of the accreditation, the Committee of experts will refer in their external report, 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,

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, “

With the aim to help experts in achieving compliance with the criteria of common understanding and decision-making, the Agency delivered to them in an electronic form the Guide for internal and external evaluation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and has developed instructional document on how to assess the fulfillment of the criteria and sub-criteria, called the Methodology of Writing the Report, containing the part that refers to the assessment of compliance with the criteria. The document, after obtaining the consent of the Agency’s SB at the 34th session, held on July 1st, 2016, was integrated as an annex to the Manual for training of experts.

Based on the opinion of the Committee of experts in the external Report, the Agency determines the Recommendation on accreditation in accordance with the Instruction on giving recommendation on accreditation (see detailed description in section 4.3 ESG 2.3 Implementing processes) and delivers it to the CEAs, which makes the final Decision on accreditation. The next step is the assessment of compliance of the Decision on accreditation with the Decision on norms and criteria (see detailed description in section 4.3 ESG 2.3 Implementing processes).
10.6 ESG 2.6 Reporting

**Standard:** Full reports by the experts should be published, clear and accessible to the academic community, external partners and other interested individuals. If the agency takes any formal decision based on the reports, the decision should be published together with the report.

**HEA COMPLIANCE**

The Committee of experts following a visit to the HEI prepares the Report that follows the predetermined structure. Each Report contains an introduction with the basic information about the HEI and organizational units, the composition of the Committee, the period during which the assessment and evaluation were conducted, a brief overview of the Committee’s work, analysis and opinion on the application of standards for internal quality assurance, descriptive assessment of compliance with each of the criteria for accreditation, recommendations for improving the quality and opinion on the outcome of the accreditation. The Agency has developed a document the Methodology of Writing the Report that helps experts to write the Report on the external evaluation of the HEI of great quality.

During the visit, in the intervals between meetings, the members of the Committee of experts discuss findings and preliminary opinions. On the last day of the visit the President of the Committee of experts on behalf of the entire Committee, to all the representatives of the HEI interviewed, represents the Committee’s preliminary findings, without giving opinion on the outcome of the accreditation. At that meeting, the discussion on presented findings is not practiced.

After the visit, the Committee of experts makes the Report, and submission of it to the HEI gives the opportunity to get acquainted with the contents of the Report and in an appropriate time frame indicate if possible substantive or factual omissions have been made in the Report. The final/signed Report shall be submitted to the Agency with the aim of issuing recommendation on accreditation via the CEAs or directly to the Agency.

The Agency publishes complete reports after the completion of the process, that is after the entry of the HEI into the State Register. In addition to the Report of experts, for each specific HEI, the Agency on its website under the section the List of accredited higher education institutions announces the Decision on appointment of the Committee of experts, the Recommendation on the accreditation and the Decision on registration of the HEI in the State Register.

Although there have been no negative outcomes of accreditation so far, the Agency has also ensured that in cases with such an outcome provides the publication of the Report. Thus, in the spirit of transparency and the right of access to information, on its website created a new section, Reports of the Committees of experts. ([http://hea.gov.ba/Kvalitet/izvjestaji_komisija_eksperata/Default.aspx?id=6502](http://hea.gov.ba/Kvalitet/izvjestaji_komisija_eksperata/Default.aspx?id=6502)).

In order to determine the applicability criteria, usefulness and appropriateness of reports of experts and contained recommendations, the Agency, at the end of 2014, conducted an evaluation, which included the HEIs that completed their accreditation process. Evaluation findings indicate that issued recommendations of the Committees of experts mainly fulfilled their purpose, and that the HEIs used them when creating action plans for quality improvement.
10.7 ESG 2.7 Complaints and appeals

**Standard:** Complaints and appeals processes should be clearly defined as part of the design of external quality assurance processes and communicated to the institutions.

**HEA COMPLIANCE**

In the process of accreditation the HEI may object to the composition of the Committee of experts. In the Legal remedies in the Decision on each appointed committee of experts it may be appealed to the Agency against the Decision within 8 days of receipt of the Decision. The Agency, in this case, acts in accordance with the Law on Administrative Procedure (Administrative Procedure Act) 37. The APA prescribes the principle of subsidiary application of the rules under which in the administrative areas, for which the law prescribes a special procedure, shall be dealt with under the provisions of this Law, provided that the provisions of this Law shall act in all matters that are not regulated by a special law.

The HEIs have the right to respond on the Report of the Committee of experts, that is to provide comments after the final harmonization of the Report, and before their submission to the Agency, or the competent education authorities.

Appealing against the Decision on accreditation is regulated differently in the regulations of the relevant educational authorities. In this regard, in some cases the Law stipulates that an appeal may be lodged to the Agency, while others do not stipulate the possibility of appeal, but finality of the decision against which an administrative dispute can be initiated in accordance with the Law on Administrative Disputes.

The FLHE in Article 49) paragraph 7, prescribes the jurisdiction of the Agency or the SB, if identified mismatch of decision on accreditation of HEI with minimal standards in the field of higher education and criteria for accreditation, to take certain measures for the harmonization of accreditation decisions, or the annulment of the decision on accreditation.

The Agency has, through the revised documents Decision on norms for determining minimal standards in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina that are in the process of adoption, elaborated in detail the procedure of complaints and appeals throughout the accreditation process.

The mechanism of Complaints at a public competition for the selection of national and international experts for quality assessment and audit and giving recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs, the Agency has regulated in the Rulebook on the manner of conducting a public competition for the selection of national and international experts for quality assessment and audit and giving recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs that specifies the possibility of complaint for candidates and making the decision on complaints.

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11 THE INFORMATION AND OPINION OF STAKEHOLDERS

The Agency has so far paid particular attention to the opinion of stakeholders, in order to improve all the processes and activities in the interest of the development of higher education and quality assurance. The Agency has made three satisfaction surveys of stakeholders who are users of the Agency in the following periods:

- from November 22nd–December 6th, 2013 conducted by the consulting firm IPSOS Sarajevo through realization of the Program of Strengthening Public Institutions in BiH which was implemented by the GIZ in BiH and
- from December 10th–24th, 2015 which the Agency implemented independently through a web survey,
- From December 1st – 16th, 2016, that the Agency also independently conducted via web questionnaire.

The results of these studies showed that there was a small decline in customer satisfaction with the final beneficiaries for 2015 (7.0) compared to 2013 when the total score was 7.2. The Agency has in the period after the survey taken a series of activities for the improvement process, which is described in the previous chapters of the SAR, and which, according to the results of the December survey resulted in the increase of satisfaction of the stakeholders of the Agency from 7.0 to 8.0. Reasons for the increase except in the intensified activities of the Agency towards stakeholders between two surveys can be found in the better date of the 2016 survey in relation to the 2015 survey, and especially in the expressed interest of stakeholders of the Agency for activities related to full membership of the Agency in the ENQA that see it as their goal.

Based on indicators of "the Analysis of the accreditation process in terms of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina", a total of 74% of the respondents out of 19 surveyed HEIs are completely or substantially satisfied with the defined procedure of accreditation, which represents nearly three-quarters of the total number of respondents. Based on this, we can conclude that the accreditation procedures are clear and well-defined, but 26% of respondents are partially satisfied with the defined procedures. The results of the analysis (Figure 3) showed that the organization of the process is an essential aspect in the process of accreditation. Therefore higher education institutions have concluded their satisfaction with the organization of the process by the Agency, the competent education authorities and the Committee of experts.

The results showed a high degree of complete and substantial satisfaction with the organization referring to the Committee of experts, followed by the Agency, and the competent educational authorities were assessed with the lowest mark.
The work of the Committee of experts is particularly important in the accreditation process, that is the satisfaction of a higher education institution with the work of the Committee of experts. Particularly important are elements of preparedness, professionalism, ethics, accuracy, adequacy and communication. The results of the questionnaire (Figure 4) show that the Committee of experts for the most part deserved complete and substantial satisfaction with their work at the university. Successful communication particularly stands out, and ethics, accuracy and adequacy are also highly evaluated.
In May 2016, the Agency conducted a survey of experts who participated in the process of accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in order to promote and support continuous monitoring and improvement of the accreditation process, to identify and evaluate effective practices, identify gaps and weaknesses, but with the long-term aim of continuous quality improvement process of external evaluation.

The questionnaire, among other things also questioned experts’ satisfaction with the cooperation with the Agency during the accreditation process, in terms of timeliness, transparency, availability and expertise. The analysis showed that the highest percentage of experts (more than 66%) are completely satisfied with the cooperation, while only a small number (2%) are partially satisfied. The analysis was conducted on the basis of 36 processed responses of national and international experts of all categories.

![Figure 5](image)

**Figure 5** *The satisfaction of experts with the cooperation with the Agency during the accreditation process*

A high percentage of experts, even 97.5% holds that the preparatory meeting of the Committee of experts, which takes place the day before the visit, is useful for their work, and 70.3% of them consider it sufficient for joint preparation of all members of the Committee of experts.

A high percentage of experts believe that the information and documents that they receive in the accreditation process are clear and useful, but also that the presence of representatives of agencies during the visit, as the coordinator, improve the accreditation process.

In this regard, the Agency has taken concrete steps, and that was actually predicted by the Decision on norms, according to which the Agency would, in appointing a Committee of experts, determine a representative of the Agency who would provide support to the Committee of experts in terms of the interpretation of acts of the Agency and provide advice on the work and process, and without impact on the assessment of compliance with the criteria and the opinion of the outcome of accreditation.

In addition to the above suggestions, recommendations for improving the accreditation process from the perspective of experts, among other things, are: regular trainings, common understanding of the accreditation process and the interpretation of the criteria, as well as more flexible access to experts from the category of students, who are the most fickle category of experts. Regular trainings have already been planned by the Manual for training of experts.
12 SWOT ANALYSIS

The Agency, in accordance with the Decision on the process of mid-term planning, monitoring and reporting in institutions of BiH on an annual basis for the next three years, brings its own Mid-Term Plan in accordance with the Mid-Term Program of the Work of the CM BiH. The mid-term objective of the Agency shall be determined in accordance with the strategic objectives in accordance with the mandate, mission and vision of the Agency. An important role in the preparation for determining the mid-term objective has SWOT analysis as a means of assessing the environment in which the Agency works.

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<th>the Analysis of WEAKNESSES</th>
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<td>1. Insufficient number of employed civil servants</td>
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<td>2. Competent civil servants and employees</td>
<td>2. Undeveloped system of motivation and stimulation of employees</td>
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<td>3. Provided technical equipment and regular maintenance</td>
<td>3. Insufficient use of electronic document management (eDMS)</td>
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<td>4. Involvement in international projects and developed international cooperation</td>
<td>4. They passed all the necessary internal acts which would specifically define certain work processes within development of higher education and quality assurance</td>
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<td>5. Good internal communication and teamwork</td>
<td>5. Non-systematic approach to solving certain issues</td>
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<td>6. The established system of mid-term planning</td>
<td>6. Inadequate workspaces for organization of events with stakeholders (training experts, workshops, conferences ...)</td>
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<td>7. The execution of tasks in accordance with the terms laid down in the Work Program and other documents of the Agency</td>
<td>7. No harmonized regulations on higher education in BiH</td>
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<td>8. Continuous communication and technical support to stakeholders</td>
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<td>9. The CEENQA and INQAAHE membership</td>
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<th>the Analysis of OPPORTUNITIES</th>
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<td>1. Different interpretation of the FLHE</td>
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<td>2. Access to donor resources and international funds</td>
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<td>3. Accessibility to the IPA funds and involvement in new projects</td>
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<td>4. Possibility to gain experience and new knowledge from participating in projects</td>
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<td>5. Availability of the CSA training</td>
<td>5. The CM BiH moratorium on new employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Continuous IT progress</td>
<td>6. Low mobility of students/teaching staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Adoption of new strategic documents for the education sector in BiH</td>
<td>7. The high degree of perception of corruption in BiH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Development of the Qualifications Framework in BiH</td>
<td>8. Incomplete and unreliable data in the field of higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Raising awareness of the academic community and society about the importance of insurance and building a culture of quality in HE</td>
<td>9. Establishing agencies for quality assurance by each competent education authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The support of GIZ on establishing a system of internal quality of the Agency by the CAF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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38 (“Official Gazette of BiH” No. 62/14)
13 CURRENT CHALLENGES AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

In the past, thanks to the activities of the Agency, as well as other participants in the processes of quality assurance in higher education, significant progress was made in the development of the external, but also internal quality assurance system. The key contribution of the Agency is reflected in raising awareness, primarily the academic community, but also other stakeholders, as well as the general public about the necessity and strengthening of the quality assurance in higher education in BiH. However, the fact is that the established system of quality higher education in BiH should still continuously be developed and perfected in accordance with the new challenges and demands of the global reform process in this area.

The focus in quality assurance in the future work of the Agency should be indisputably the continuation and intensification of communication with competent education authorities and higher education institutions and the improvement of the model of accreditation based on a clear division of powers with the consent of all participants of this division. The work on this model is one of the key challenges facing the Agency.

Although there is an evident need to improve the model of accreditation in cooperation with all the relevant education authorities, it is particularly necessary to continue activities on defining the complete legal framework for the accreditation of higher education institutions in the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The role of the Agency is consultative in terms of professional support and assistance with the aim of eliminating the current administrative barriers and strengthening the academic approach in this area.

In the previous period, in the field of higher education, the Agency was focused on fulfillment of jurisdiction under Article 48 of the Framework Law, which are mainly related to the development of higher education. It led to numerous documents, standards, criteria, recommendations, and the Agency has, generally speaking, completed the first round of legislative activities within its jurisdiction. The focus in the future should be on monitoring the implementation of adopted documents, and responses to the difficulties in the implementation and future reforms. One of the tasks is to establish a system of action on education policy, specific information and reports that will be the result of expert analysis.

The Bologna Process, as a global framework for reform of higher education, the development of a qualifications framework, in particular the development and implementation of a framework of higher education qualifications, establishment of links between higher education and the labor market and more clear testimony of purpose of education through learning outcomes both at the level of the study program and at the level of each subject are activities that are in the future focus of the Agency, in accordance with its responsibilities.

The Agency is committed to continuous efforts to improve procedures for accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs in line with the ESG 2015. In this regard, a significant change, whose implementation stands as a challenge in the coming period, is to monitor the implementation of follow up activities that instead of competent education authorities should be conducted by the Agency. The focus of the work will also be on improving the training of all categories of experts in cooperation with the competent education authorities, and all with the aim of further development of the accreditation process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A special attention will be paid
to the improvement of the laws and regulations in order to enable a more flexible status of students, experts in committees for accreditation with the aim of their complete and effective participation in these processes.

After institutional accreditation, the challenge that awaits us is the accreditation of study programs. In the Decision on the adoption of the priorities for the development of higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2016-2020, which was adopted by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the part referring to quality assurance, it is specified that it is necessary to establish the pre-conditions and implement an efficient, transparent and accessible process of accreditation of all study programs. The Agency has developed a model of accreditation of study programs, according to which steps in the accreditation of study programs are the same as steps in the accreditation of higher education institutions, provided that it will be necessary to specifically define the procedural issues, including also the financial aspects of these procedures. In this sense, the challenge facing the Agency is synergic involvement and inclusion of all participants of this process, higher education institutions, competent education authorities and the Agency, in accordance with their legal duties and responsibilities prescribed.

Aware of the complexity of the challenges facing us, it is also necessary to institutionally strengthen the Agency, with further staffing and training of civil servants.
ANNEXES

Appendices

1. Appendix 1  The Map of HEIs in BiH
2. Appendix 2  The Review of licensed HEIs in BiH
3. Appendix 3  The List of formal legal documents that the Agency applies in its work
Appendix 1
The Map of HEIs in BiH (the academic year 2016/2017)

No Administrative-territorial part of BiH Competent Education Authorities
1 Una-Sana Canton Ministry of Education of Una-Sana Canton
2 Posavina Canton Ministry of Education of Posavina Canton
3 Tuzla Canton Ministry of Education of Posavina Canton
4 Zenica-Doboj Canton Ministry of Education of Zenica-Doboj Canton
5 Bosnian-Podrinje Canton Ministry of Education of Bosnian-Podrinje Canton
6 Central Bosnia Canton Ministry of Education of Central Bosnia Canton
7 Herzegovina-Neretva Canton Ministry of Education of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton
8 West Herzegovina Canton Ministry of Education of West Herzegovina Canton
9 Sarajevo Canton Ministry of Education of Sarajevo Canton
10 Canton 10 Ministry of Education of Canton 10
11 Republic of Srpska Ministry of Education and Culture of RS
12 Brčko District BiH Department of Education in the Government of the BD BiH
Appendix 2
The Review of licensed HEIs in BiH (the academic year 2016/2017)

HEIs in BiH
46

Federation BiH
25

Republic of Srpska
21

BiH district BiH

Public VŠU
6

Private HEIs
19

Private HEIs
17

Public VŠU
4

Private HEIs

1. University of Sarajevo
2. University of Travnik
3. University Sarajevo School of Science and Technology
4. International University of Sarajevo
5. International Burch University of Sarajevo
6. American University in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tuzla
7. International University of Travnik
8. University „Hercegovina”, Mostar
9. Higher International School Cazin
10. American School of Economics
11. High School "CEBS - Center for Business Studies"
12. "Logos Center" College Mostar
13. Higher School for Tourism and Management Konjic
14. University of Modern Sciences CKM-Mostar
15. Higher School "International Academy of Business and Information" Tuzla
16. International University of Gorazde
17. The European University of Kallet, Tuzla
18. Higher School The Center for Multidisciplinary Studies in Tuzla
19. Higher School for Finance and Accounting FV/Na Tuzla

1. University for Business Studying, Banja Luka
2. University for Business, Engineering and Management PIM Banja Luka
3. Independent University, Banja Luka
4. Pan-European University Aperius
5. Sllobodin P University, Bijojina
6. University Sinergija Bijojina
7. Higher School, BLC College, Banja Luka
8. Higher School for Applied and Law Sciences, Promet, Banja Luka
9. College Primus, Gradiska
10. College of Business Service Istočno Sarajevo - Sokolac
11. University „Bijojina”, Bijojina
12. Higher School, CAPA FI Communication College, Banja Luka
13. Higher School for Economic and Computer Science Prijedor
14. Business and Technical College Doboj
15. Higher School for Information Technology, Economics and Entrepreneurship Laskal
16. Higher School "The Faculty of Cosmetology and Aesthetic" Banja Luka
17. Higher Medical School of Health Doboj

From academic 2014/2015 year is not possible to get a valid information about status of HEIs in BD BiH
Appendix 3

The List of formal legal documents that the Agency applies in its work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic framework</th>
<th>Status issues, administration and management of the Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decision on beginning of the work and determination of the seat of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance</td>
<td>“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 59/07 and 59/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statute of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance</td>
<td>“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 10/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rulebook on Internal Organization of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance</td>
<td>“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 86/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rules of Procedure</td>
<td>No. 01-60-03/09 from 5/2/2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rulebook on the implementation of the Law on protection of personal data in the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance</td>
<td>No. 06-02-1-398/13 from 28/5/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules of Procedure of the Steering Board of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance</td>
<td>No. 06-02-1-88/13 from 31/1/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions for the implementation of the rules for consultation in legislative drafting</td>
<td>No. 03-07-2-925-1/13 from 13/12/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules of Procedure of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance in the case of anonymous reports of corruption and registration of persons who are not employees of the Agency</td>
<td>No. 06-02-1-957/12 from 1/11/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions on conditions and manner of submission of internal complaint by the employees of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance about suspicion or the existence of corruption</td>
<td>No. 06-02-1-310-1/14 from 10/4/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rulebook on Internal Control</td>
<td>No. 06-02-1-327-1/14 from 22/4/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules of Procedure of web Newsroom</td>
<td>No. 06-02-1-876/10 from 13/9/2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions on the appointment of the Committee of national and international experts for quality assessment and audit and giving</td>
<td>No. 06-02-1-896-2/10 from 20/7/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. 05-02-1-553-1/14 from 15/7/2014</td>
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</table>
recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions, and others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision on the memorandum of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance</th>
<th>No. DZ 01-50-1071/09 from 30/12/2009</th>
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</thead>
</table>

### Financial business, accounting and procurement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rules on the internal procedures of creating and recording obligations and manner of signing financial documents</th>
<th>No. 35-1/17 from 19/1/2017</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rulebook on the cash management</td>
<td>No. 06-02-1-70-1/17 from 1/2/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision on determining the cash maximum</td>
<td>No. 01-134-2/09 from 5/3/2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Decision on the use of phones</td>
<td>No. 06-02-1-994-1/14 from 31/12/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions on the conclusion of service contracts</td>
<td>No. DZ 06-02-1-538/11 from 16/8/2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Rules on direct agreement procedure</td>
<td>No. 06-02-1-938-1/14 from 17/12/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules on Public Procurement</td>
<td>No. 06-02-1-832-1/15 from 4/11/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules on representation and gifts</td>
<td>No. 01-138-2/09 from 5/3/2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal procedures of making mid-term and annual draft request for funding of the Agency</td>
<td>No. 01-02-254/10 from 25/2/2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rulebook on the procurement and manner of use of official vehicles</td>
<td>No. 06-02-1-996-1/14 from 31/12/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rulebook on the list of assets and the source of funds</td>
<td>No. 01-143-1/08 from 29/12/2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions on financial management and control in the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance</td>
<td>No. 06-02-1-16-1/17 from 10/1/2017</td>
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### Quality Assurance in Higher Education in BiH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision on the criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina</th>
<th>“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 96/16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decision on criteria for selection of national and international experts to provide assessment and conduct quality reviews and give recommendation on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs</td>
<td>“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 88/09 i 3/13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision on norms for determining minimal standards in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 100/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rulebook on Keeping the State Register of Accredited Higher Education Institutions</td>
<td>“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 91/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions on the manner of conformity assessment accreditation decisions with minimal standards in the field of higher education and criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>No. 06-02-1-766/11 from 4/11/2011</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision on the method of forming the Committee for the selection of national and international experts to provide assessment and conduct quality reviews and give recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs</td>
<td>“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 88/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rulebook on the manner of conducting the public competition for the selection of national and international experts to provide assessment and conduct quality reviews and give recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs</td>
<td>“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 7/19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Development of Higher Education in BiH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations on criteria for licensing of higher education institutions and study programs in Bosnia and Herzegovina</th>
<th>“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 13/12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations on criteria and standards to the Ministry of the Republic of Srpska, Cantonal Ministries and the Brčko District BiH for establishment and closure of higher education institutions and for re-structuring of study programs</td>
<td>“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 13/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions on the form and content of Diploma and Diploma Supplement issued by accredited institutions of higher education</td>
<td>“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 86/09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>