

WORK AND FINANCIAL PLAN FOR 2016



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Nacionalna agencija Republike Slovenije
za kakovost v visokem šolstvu

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for Higher Education



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Introduction

It would make sense to prepare and adopt the annual work and financial plan at the beginning of the calendar year. However, this is virtually impossible. Numerous documents are adopted at the beginning of the year for the previous year: business report, annual accounts, report on the work and operation of the Agency – we must also perform the self-evaluation of the Agency for the previous year and prepare the action plan for the following year. These are time-consuming tasks, and it would make sense to join a few of the abovementioned reports. Therefore, we are also attaching the action (operative) plan for 2016 to our work plan for 2016.

According to Article 51.i. of HEA, the Director of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (hereinafter: the Agency) shall prepare the proposal of the financial plan and adopt the work plan of the Agency, for which it shall obtain the approval of the Agency Council. This will likely happen in September, even though the draft of the plan was prepared at the end of June 2016.

2015 was a special year, at least for the co-workers of the Agency. In 2015, the ESF project "Establishment of a national quality assurance system in higher education 2010-2014" concluded, which was extended until 31 December 2015. Since the ESF resources provided for approximately 60% of the total annual budget of the Agency, the Agency worked very hard to obtain these resources in the integral part of the budget. But it was only partially successful and because of the limited resources it was not possible to extend the employment agreement for four of the fourteen members of staff. At the end of 2015, the annual budgets for 2016 and 2017 were adopted at the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Slovenia, which only provided EUR 1,221,864 and EUR 1,178,072, respectively. The Agency would be able to operate with quality with approximately EUR 2.0 million annually, even though it was promised EUR 6.0 million in the NHEP 2011-2020.

The Agency was successful in achieving two strategic objectives by 2015 – entry into the European register of agencies EQAR and the full membership in ENQA. This was also one of the six fully implemented actions from the NHEP 2011-2020 (the total number of actions was 46). In the quality of the implementation of the set tasks and the achievement of the objectives, the Agency was economically rational and the total amount spent from the ESF funds was only EUR 4,606,499 (for the period 2010-2015). The value of the project upon confirmation in 2010 for the Agency was namely EUR 10,090,257.00.

In addition to our regular work, we spend quite some time in 2016 implementing a user-friendly eNakvis information system. We have high expectations regarding the act amending HEA, which is expected to legalize institutional evaluation and accreditation and leave the concern for study programmes to the autonomy of higher education institutions. At the same time, we shall prepare the starting points of the draft of the act regarding the Agency, and prepare a strategy for the work of the Agency for the period 2016-2020. The annual work plan for 2016 is supplemented with a detailed action plan.

Ivan Leban

In Ljubljana, July 2016.



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SLOVENIAN QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Organization

Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (hereinafter: the Agency) was established based on the Act Amending the Higher Education Act – HEA-G (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No 86/2009). The act and the Decision on the Establishment of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No 114/2009) determine its bodies, competences and tasks.

The basis for the establishment and operation of the Agency is Article 51.e of HEA (hereinafter: HEA) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No 32/2012 – official consolidated text, 40/12 – Fiscal Balance Act, 57/12 – Act Amending the Road Transport Act-2D, 109/12 and 85/14). The Agency is an entity of public law established to assure quality in higher education and to perform developmental and advisory work in the field for which it was established.

By taking into consideration the legal provisions, the purpose and aim of the Agency are as follows:

- quality assurance and improvement in higher education;
- professionalization of the quality evaluation;
- gaining the public's trust into the system of quality assessment;
- compliance of operation with the applicable European standards.

The Agency shall encourage higher education institutions towards:

- accountability for the quality of the creation and implementation of study programmes;
- constant development and establishment of the culture of quality;
- regular annual self-evaluation and periodical external evaluations based on clear and consistent criteria and applicable evaluation.

The Agency consists of: the Council as a first-instance decision-making body and the Appeal Committee as the second-instance decision-making body, and the Technical Departments of the Agency led by the Director.



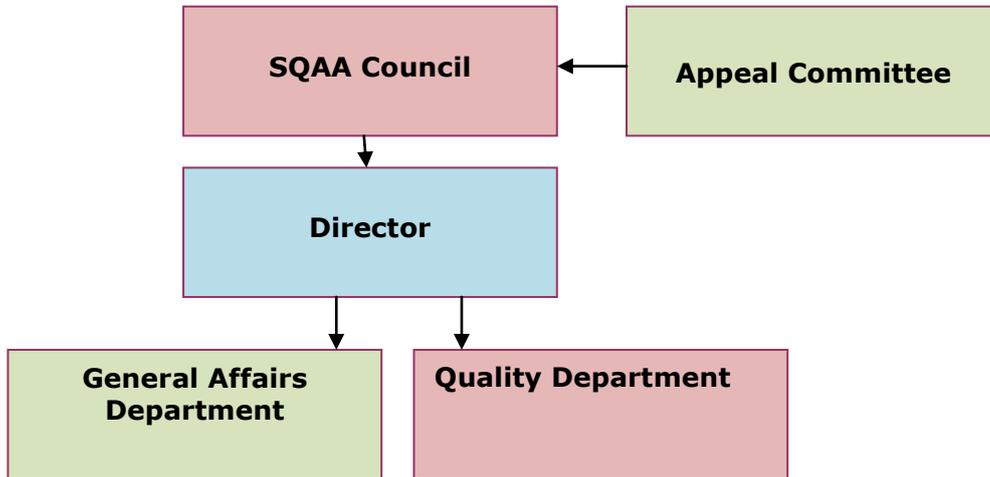
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Organizational scheme of the Agency



From the Agency Development Strategy for the period 2011–2016

Mission

The Agency provides for development and operation of the quality assurance system in the Slovenian higher education area. It operates responsibly, both formally and contextually, and counsels all stakeholders and participants in tertiary education in line with European and global development trends.

Vision

The Agency shall, with its system of quality assurance development, contribute to higher education in Slovenia being of high quality in terms of education and research, internationally recognisable, competitive and equally integrated in the global higher education area.



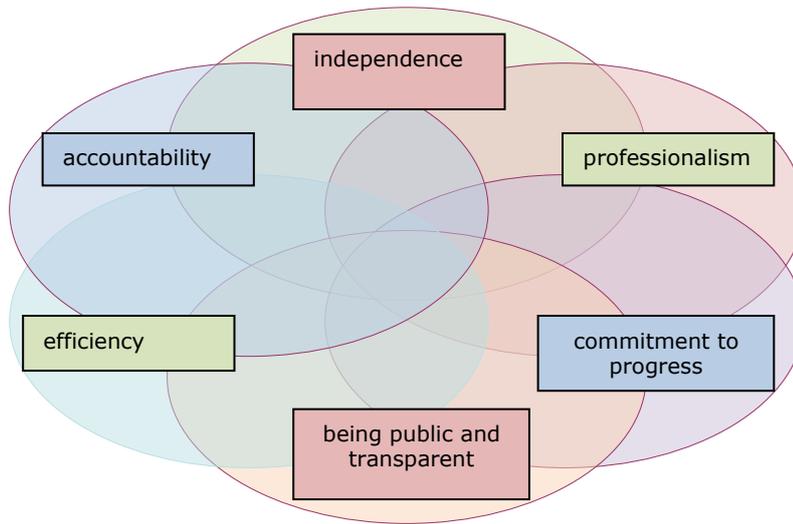
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Values



Strategic objectives

1. admission of the Agency to international associations (ENQA and EQAR);
2. development and functioning of the quality assurance system;
3. monitoring progress and strengthening higher education quality;
4. presenting the role, importance and quality of operation of the Agency in the public for better recognition;
5. co-creating and developing higher education policy in the field of quality;
6. promoting the quality of transnational education;
7. providing high quality consulting services of the Agency by professionally qualified personnel.



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Activities of the Agency in 2015

(summarized from the final part of the Report on Work and Operation of the Agency in 2015)

In 2015, the Agency lived by its mission: "The Agency provides for development and operation of the quality assurance system in the Slovenian higher education area. It operates responsibly, both formally and contextually, and counsels all stakeholders and participants in tertiary education in line with European and global development trends."

The tasks the Agency performs in accordance with the law and other legal acts are a part of its permanent operation. The Agency plays an important role in the establishment of the Slovenian higher education area. In June 2015, there were 98 higher education institutions and higher vocational colleges in Slovenia, and the register of the Ministry featured 947 accredited study programmes.

In 2015, the Agency achieved its second important strategic objective. It gained the full membership to ENQA. The Agency is compliant with seventeen ENQA ESG standards (Parts 2 and 3): it is fully compliant (10), mostly compliant (6) and partially compliant (1) with the standards. Problematic is the standards 3.4 – long-term stable and sustainable financing of the Agency. The next focus of the Agency is the establishment of an effective information system.

The Agency has been entered into the register of trustworthy agencies EQAR (2013), <http://www.eqar.eu>, and is a full member of ENQA (2015), <http://www.enqa.eu>.

The Agency has also gained more trust from stakeholders in higher education and higher vocational education and from the general public; it has also become more recognizable, both at home and internationally. It continually strives to improve its own quality which is the basis for an efficient system of external quality assurance in higher education, agreed upon with all stakeholders and generally recognized. Unfortunately, the general public gets to know about the activity of the Agency in light of negative events in Slovenian higher education (non-accredited programmes, plagiarism).

We believe that the Agency has proven with its work that it has successfully established a national system of quality assurance and improvement in higher education in the Republic of Slovenia.

In May 2015, the politicians, responsible for higher education, adopted the revised European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area, EHEA – ESG 2015 – http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf in Yerevan, Armenia.



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WORK PLAN FOR 2016

The tasks from the work plan have been defined by taking into consideration the strategic objectives of the Agency from the Development Strategy of the Agency for the Period 2011-2016, adopted by the Agency Council in November 2011:

- development and functioning of the quality assurance system,
- monitoring progress and strengthening higher education quality,
- presenting the role, importance and quality of operation of the Agency in the public for better recognition,
- co-creating and developing higher education policy in the field of quality,
- promoting the quality of transnational education,
- admission of the Agency to international associations (ENQA and EQAR),
- providing high quality consulting services of the Agency by professionally qualified personnel.

In accordance with the above strategy we will strive towards the following in 2016

1. establishment and further development of the quality assurance system (mainly the establishment of the eNakvis information system)
2. transformation of the quality assurance system in higher and higher vocational education (possible change of legislation) and
3. recognition of the Agency in the Slovenian higher education area and in the public.

The specified strategic guidelines are related with the activity for a quality of work of the Agency through regular annual self-evaluations, participation with external stakeholders or by establishing an efficient and mutually agreed upon system of external quality assurance and the participation with the European Higher Education Area, EHEA, by taking into consideration the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (hereinafter: ESG).

Specific tasks in 2016 shall be presented regarding the findings and recommendations of the Self-Evaluation Report of the Agency 2015 and are also a part of the action plan for 2016. The action plan for 2016 is presented at the end of the annual work plan. At the same time, it partially also includes the recommendations from the reports of international experts who performed the external evaluation of the Agency in accordance with the ESG criteria in November 2014. Their final report is dated March 2015. Only certain priority tasks are shown.

Individual assignments of the Agency in 2016 shall be suitably divided and shown, which will simplify the subsequent preparation of the annual report about the work of the Agency in 2016. But since the Agency Council confirmed the Agency's Quality Manual at its 88th meeting on 19 February 2015, the instructions from this manual have also been taken into consideration.

We pay more attention to the past tasks which have not been achieved. Among those is primarily the establishment of an information system which the Agency urgently



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needs for further quality work and an uninterrupted operation and preparation of various analysis and trends.

In 2016, the Agency will strive to establish more trust from all higher education stakeholders and to enhance its independent advisory role in the Slovenian higher education area (info@nakvis.si).

A) ACCREDITATIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND STUDY PROGRAMMES AND EVALUATIONS OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL COLLEGES

PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS			
Activity 1: accreditations in higher education			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Anticipated number of applications	Notes
Initial accreditation of study programmes	Quality Department / Agency Council	20	The data for the initial accreditations is only an estimate.
Re-accreditation of study programmes		90	
Initial accreditation of higher education institutions		3	
Re-accreditation of higher education institutions		5	
Transformation of higher education institutions		2	
Transnational higher education		8	
Activity 2: evaluations of higher vocational colleges			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Anticipated number of applications	
External evaluations of higher vocational colleges	Quality Department / Agency Council	11	

Note: The applications to change study programmes are not considered in the table. According to the Fiscal Balance Act (ZUJF, Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 40/2012), a private higher education institution may change the compulsory components of study programmes according to the same procedure under which they have been adopted. A university changes the compulsory components of study programmes on its own. It then informs the Agency on the modified compulsory components of study programmes within 30 days of their adoption. The Agency considers the modification when re-accrediting study programmes.

Explanations:

The list of publicly available records of the accredited higher education institutions and study programmes is published at the Agency's website <http://www.nakvis.si> under three links and additionally the register at MESS.

- [Public records on the accreditation of study programmes from 2004 to 2010](#)
- [Public records on study programmes accredited after 1 March 2010](#)
- [Plan for re-accreditation and public records on the accreditation of higher education institutions](#)
- [Register of higher education institutions](#) (and the list of publicly valid study programmes)



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B) ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION SYSTEM OF THE AGENCY

(also in the Action Plan for 2016)

Activity: Establishment of a comprehensive information system			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Implementation deadline	Expected result
Presentation of the new electronic application forms for electronic applications in the eNakvis system	Technical Department	Sept 2016	More efficient, rationalized and quality work, simplification and improvement of accreditation and evaluation procedures and other work processes at the Agency. Connectedness with the e-VŠ system as well.
Prompt coordination of the changes in the application forms with the legislation changes and changes of criteria	Technical Department	Permanent assignment	

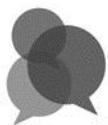


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C) UPDATE OF THE AGENCY STRATEGY AND DETERMINATION OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES from 2016-2020

(already in the Action Plan 2015)

activity: Strategic objectives of the Agency 2016-2020			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Implementation deadline	Expected results
Determination of the strategic objectives of the Agency 2016-2020 by taking into consideration NHEP 2011-2020	Quality Department / Director	September 2016	Appointment of a working group
		October 2016	Preparation of the draft of the Agency's strategy and determination of priority objectives up to 2020
		November 2016	Discussion at the Agency Council
		December 2016	Adoption and publication



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D) SYSTEM FOR NOTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE AGENCY (from the Action Plan for 2014)

activity: System for notifying stakeholders in higher education			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Implementation deadline	Expected result
Establishment of an efficient system for notifying stakeholders about important events, good practice and the changes of the legal acts of the Agency	Quality Department / Director	September 2016	Determination of the persons responsible at the Agency
		September 2016	Preparation of the plan for notifying
		October 2016	Prompt monitoring and notifying (newsletters, Twitter)



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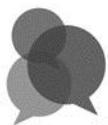
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E) TRAINING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE AGENCY COUNCIL AND THE EXPERTS

IMPLEMENTATION OBJECTIVE 1: Training new members of the Agency Council			
Activity: training			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Implementation deadline	Expected result
Implementation of training for new members of the Agency Council	Director, Agency Council, foreign guest	October 2016	Acquaintance with the legal acts and procedures of the Agency, implementation of the training
IMPLEMENTATION OBJECTIVE 2: Training candidates for experts			
Activity: training			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Implementation deadline	Expected result
Training of candidates for entry into the Agency's register of experts	Quality Department Director foreign guest	September 2016	Appointment of the working group
		October 2016	Supplementation of the training programme
		November 2016	Discussion at the Council
		November 2016 January 2017	Implementation of two trainings



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F) ENQA – TRAINING OF REVIEWERS (ENQA Agency Reviews: Training of reviewers)

<http://www.engq.eu/index.php/events/engq-agency-reviews-training-of-reviewers/>

Activity: Help in the execution of the training of ENQA reviewers			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Implementation deadline	Expected result
ENQA – Training of reviewers – City Hotel, Ljubljana, 22-23 September 2016. (in cooperation with the ENQA secretariat) www.engq.eu	Quality Department, General Affairs Department, Director	January 2016	Appointment of a working group
		May 2016	Agreement regarding the organization (reservation of the halls, the hotel, transportation etc.)
		September 2016	Execution of the two-day seminar in City Hotel, Ljubljana

ADDITIONAL TASKS in 2016

In 2016, we will continue the correspondence with the Court of Audit of the Republic of Slovenia regarding the audit of the efficiency of the procedures of evaluation, accreditation and granting concessions in the assurance of quality and diversity of study programmes. The audit began in 2014 and a clarification meeting was held on 3 December 2015. We expect to receive the Audit Report in 2016 and to prepare a response report with corrective measures in 2016.

Based on experience from previous years, we also expect several inspection visits in 2016.

By adopting the Slovenian Qualifications Framework Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No 104/2015), it was imposed on the Agency to promptly provide the data for the EQF National Coordination Point (NKT SOK-EOK) needed for the entry of a qualification to the register of qualifications for the Slovenian Qualifications Framework in the prescribed form, but no additional resources were provided.

In 2016, the EIQAS project (Enhancing Internal Quality Assurance Systems, financed by the European Commission, namely from the Erasmus+ programme for 2014, 2015, 2016 (field: strategic partnerships in higher education; action: participation for innovation and exchange of good practices) shall continue. Our Agency also participates in this project (project identification number: 2014-1-PL01-KA203-003593). The EIQAS project consortium consists of partners from Poland (PKA is the project coordinator), Slovenia, Portugal and Bulgaria, in its constitution it joins four quality assurance agencies (PKA, NAKVIS, A3ES and NEAA), rectors' conferences from Poland and Portugal and higher education institutions from Slovenia and Portugal. The "Improvement of internal quality systems" EIQAS project focuses on two objectives:

- increasing the capacities of higher education institutions in the participating countries to develop their internal quality assurance, with emphasis on increasing their awareness and understanding of Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines ENQA (ESG) and by determining, developing and expanding good innovative practice in internal quality assurance; and on
- increasing the capacities of the participating agencies for quality assurance in external quality assurance systems by comparing the methodologies between agencies for an assessment of the internal quality assurance and the exchange and development of good practices in the assessment of internal systems of quality.

The Agency shall apply for international projects, related with quality assurance in higher education.

In 2016 (specifically, on 30 September 2016) the implementation of the so-called "pre-Bologna" study programmes shall conclude. We expect complications as the transition to the "Bologna study programmes" is not possible under the criteria for transitions.



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In 2016, the Director of the Agency shall continue his work in the two international associations: as ECA vice-president www.ecahe.eu and as CEENQA vice-president www.ceenqa.eu.

RESOURCES

Financial resources

The activities of the Agency shall be financed in 2016 solely from integral resources of the budget (this is a **significant** change compared to 2015, when the financing came from two sources – the integral resources and the ESF resources), namely:

- salaries of the employees,
- costs incurred in the accreditations of higher education institutions and study programmes and external evaluations of higher education institutions, study programmes and higher vocational colleges (visits of the groups of experts),
- expenses for office and general materials and services (cleaning supplies and services, newspapers and other professional literature, advertising services, computer services, expenses for representation, services of information support for users),
- expenses for special materials and services (small inventory, medical examinations for employees),
- expenses for energy, water and utilities (electrical energy, fuel consumption and heating expenses, water and utilities, garbage removal, telephones, postage and messenger services),
- transport costs and services (vehicle rental, purchase of bus tickets for Ljubljana – the Urbana card),
- expenses for business trips (daily allowances, hotel services, transports costs in the country and abroad),
- expenses regarding the on-going maintenance of the business premises, communication and other equipment, for the maintenance of the licenced software and hardware,
- expenses for business leases (lease of the business premises, hardware lease, compensation for the use of building land, software lease, lease of communication equipment),
- costs of other operative expenses (expenses of conferences, seminars and symposiums, payments under a work contract, payments for work through the student work service, expenses for professional training of employees, court costs, memberships),
- investments and major maintenance (on-going maintenance of licences software and other equipment for eNakvis, purchase of hardware and licenced software, control over the eNakvis implementation).

In 2016, the Agency was supposed to obtain, as a direct non-governmental budget user, the resources in the amount of **EUR 1,181,575.65:**

Integral resources (for 19 employees employed for an indefinite period + Director)

salaries	EUR 603,000.68
mat. costs	EUR 220,400.00
investments	EUR 50,253.67
quality of higher education (+meeting fees for the Council)	EUR 303,960.65

Therefore, the Agency is currently financing all the activities (salaries, accreditations, material costs, external experts, Agency Council, Appeal Committee) with approximately EUR 1.3 million annually.

If the Agency received only a third (that is EUR 2 million) from the promised EUR 6 million for 2016 from NHEP11 – action 20 (when the ESF resources expired), it would be able to work with quality and make further developments; otherwise, it will continue to perform its activities with the current dynamics. With these resources the Agency could design and update the external quality assurance system fully in accordance with European standards and guidelines regarding quality in higher education.

The Agency was very economical in 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015, and had spent in those years EUR 1,295,457.97; 1,301,117.05; 1,209,022.68, and 1,310,797.56; respectively.

The experience from previous years and the annual governmental limits show that the allocated resources shall not suffice and that we will have to ask the Ministry of Finance for new additional resources at the end of the year (when it will become clear how much resources we will need).

The EIQAS (Erasmus+) project – coordinator PKA (Poland) in the amount of EUR 40,288.00 is separated from the resources for the financing of the Agency's operation. It is indicated in the budget for 2016, but it all depends on when PKA intends to transfer these resources.

Financial plan for 2016 according to the type of cost

Type of cost	SQAA plan 2016
Salaries and other expenses for employees	603,000.68
Work through the student work service	5,000.00
External experts (execution of external evaluations and accreditations), meeting fees of the Council, Appeal Committee	263,960.65
Daily allowances, expenses for accommodation and travelling (for employees)	15,000.00
Informing and notifying	5,000.00
Publications	5,000.00
Promotional materials	5,000.00
Expenses related with conferences / symposiums / seminars / trainings	10,000.00
Representation	5,000.00
Computer services (eNakvis + computer network maintenance)	70,253.67
Purchase of furniture and office equipment	5,000.00
Computer equipment	6,000.00

Material costs (rent, electricity, heating...)	183,360.00
Planned expenditure - total	1,181,575.00

Human resources

The employments of the employees of the Agency are planned according to the assured resources in the integral part of the state budget for 2016. At the end of 2015 there was a significant change. The ESF project "Establishment of a national quality assurance system in higher education 2010-2014 (2015)" was concluded and additional integral resources for the functioning of the Agency were provided. This addition made the work of the Agency easier as there were many demanding tasks to be done, connected with self-evaluation, finish the work on the information system and, finally, tend to the extensive audit of the Court of Audit of the Republic of Slovenia.

Years of experience have shown us that for a quality execution of the set tasks we do not require all the anticipated resources from the ESF funds. The entire amount, which was spent by the Agency after the project, was EUR 4,606,499.48 (from the planned EUR 10,090,257.00) which sufficed for the achievement of all objectives from the project.

In the staffing plan of the Agency for 2016 (sent to the Ministry of Finance and coordinated with the Ministry for Public Administration), 19 job positions and the position of the Director are systemized in the integral resources.

For all tasks, which the Agency must perform, there are now 19 members of the staff employed for an indefinite period (the problem mainly lies in the numerous evaluations of study programmes). The profile of the employee is specific, since they have all passed the general administrative procedure exam. The Agency's legal service is strong in both the Quality Department and the General Affairs Department.

At the same time, upon the admittance to ENQA, we must comply with the ESG Standard 3.4 Resources, stating "Agencies should have adequate and proportional resources, both human and financial, to enable them to organise and run their external quality assurance process(es) in an effective and efficient manner, with appropriate provision for the development of their processes, procedures and staff."

Therefore, in 2016 similar is planned as in 2015:

1. the implementation of the information system will no longer require from the staff in the Quality Department to perform as much administrative tasks as now which stop a quick, efficient work regarding content with quality, in the processing of applications, drafting findings and reports, decisions etc.
2. some of the staff will, in addition to conducting accreditation and evaluation procedures, self-evaluation and preparation for external evaluations of the

Agency, update of legal acts and external evaluation of higher vocational colleges, have the responsibility for the tasks regarding coherent content fields; the distribution of work obligations shall take into consideration the complexity of the job position, their professional qualifications, enthusiasm and interests or the wish to perform a certain line of work:

- for participation at regular monthly meetings with the Directorate for higher education MESS;
- for the register of experts and all correspondence with the experts until the appointment of a group at the Agency Council;
- for a prompt update of information at the Agency’s website, public relations and organization of events at the Agency;
- for the maintenance of the comprehensive information system;
- for international participation and development or monitoring of the events and examples of good practice in other comparable agencies;
- for presentation brochures, reports and other publications – connected with translating;
- for prompt refreshing of data regarding the applications or accredited higher education institutions and study programmes and external evaluations of higher vocational colleges, correct archiving of applications etc.;
- for the development of internal quality control systems at institutions / schools for the transition to institutional evaluation;
- PR service of the Agency;
- for the preparation of project documentation;
- for the functioning of the group for integrity and the group for the promotion of health.

In 2016, contacts with the relevant stakeholders – Ministry of Finance, National Assembly, National Council and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport – need to be maintained. Especially with SSU and the Higher Education Council of the Republic of Slovenia.

At the Agency, the employees' union Sloka, KSS Pergam, is active and is included as much as possible in the resolution of the financial and staffing situation of the Agency, mainly in the direct discussions at MF and MESS.

Below is the proposal of the staffing plan of the Agency for 2017 and 2018

Body	Number of employees 31 December 2015	Permissible number of employees 31 December 2016	Proposal for the permissible number of employees 31 December 2017	Proposal of the permissible number of employees 31 December 2018



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SQAA	20	20	20	20
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The staffing plan shows the actual employment situation and the planned changes in the number of civil servants for the period of two years. The proposal of the staffing plan **was prepared according to budgetary possibilities, anticipated scope of work and work programmes.**

In accordance with Article 44 of the Civil Servants Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No 63/07- official consolidated text 3, 65/08, 69/08-Financial Instruments Market Act-A, 69/08-Act Amending the Insurance Act-E, 74/09 Decision of the Constitutional Court: U-I-136/07-13, 40/12-Fiscal Balance Act) the body shall adopt a staffing plan, coordinated with the adopted budget, at the latest in 60 days after the implementation of the budget.

On 31 December 2016, the maximum permissible number of employees within the financial possibilities is 20. Because of the continued execution of necessary developmental and advisory tasks, imposed on the Agency by law, and international experts (EQAR and ENQA), the number of employees at the Agency is to be gradually increased (for two employees each year, so that there would be 24 by the end of 2018). But since the anticipated financial resources do not enable that, the proposed number of employees on 31 December 2017 and 31 December 2018, respectively, remains unchanged, i.e. 20 employees.



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SQAA ACTION PLAN FOR 2016

(prepared based on the SQAA Self-evaluation report for 2015, adopted on 16 June 2016)

Field of assessment in accordance with the Agency's Quality Manual	Objectives and tasks	Activities	Participants in the activities	Activity coordinator	Deadline for the achievement of the objective and the tasks	Note
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<p>I. Accreditations and external evaluations</p>	<p>I.1 Improvement of accreditation and evaluation procedures</p>	<p>Special thematic meetings for a unified, more transparent and more efficient conducting and decision-making in accreditation and external evaluation procedures</p>	<p>Technical members of the staff</p>	<p>T. Debevec</p>	<p>Permanent activity</p>	<p>Meetings at least once a month!</p>
<p>II. Internal quality assurance system</p>	<p>II.1 Reorganization of the work at the Agency</p>	<p>More equal and more efficient distribution of assignments, guidance and monitoring of the employees' work (transition to institutional evaluation, establishment of eNakvis)</p>	<p>Director</p>	<p>Director</p>	<p>October 2016</p>	<p>Upon the adoption of the act amending HEA</p>



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	II.2 Calibration of work and training of employees and members of the Council	Organization and execution of training for new members of the Agency Council, organization and execution of special joint meetings of the members of the Council and employees, training plan for employees	T. Debevec K. Šubic B. Zupančič-Kočar invited employee of the Corruption Prevention Commission Z. Sečnik	Director	October 2016	
III. External quality assurance system of the Agency	III.1 Organization of meetings for the presentation of the updated ESG and the update of the accreditation criteria	Workshops regarding the revised ESG standards for institutions / schools and members of the Council	J. Širok K. Šubic I. Leban	T. Debevec	Fall 2016	Implementation twice a year!
		Organization of a consultation with higher education institutions regarding the revision of the accreditation criteria	T. Debevec B. Zupančič-Kočar J. Širok K. Šubic	Director	Nov 2016	
	III.2 Implementation of trainings for candidates for experts	Organization and implementation of training of new candidates for entry into the register of	T. Debevec J. Kramar M. Milas N. Kramar J. Širok	K. Šubic	Fall 2016	After the student training at SSU



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		experts (external experts are also participating)	B. Zupančič-Kočar G. Rebernik representative of the Council			
	III.3 Implementation of workshops for the Agency's experts	Organization and implementation of (thematic) workshops for experts for the improvement of contextual assessments and drafting evaluation reports	Technical members of the staff	K. Šubic	Jan 2017	
	III. 4 Enhancing of the Agency's advisory role	Preparation and implementation of a plan for successful communication and notifying of stakeholders regarding the activities of the Agency and the changes and good practices in the field of improvement of internal and external systems of quality and increasing the	I. Leban T. Debevec A. Krček A. Kajtezovič M. Milas K. Šubic	M. Mravlja	Dec 2016	



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		Agency's recognition				
	III. 5 Regulation of the Agency's operation with a special act	Preparation of starting points and the draft of the act regarding the Agency	T. Debevec B. Zupančič-Kočar Z. Sečnik M. Bajuk-Malešič M. Milas	Director		Jan 2017



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IV. Criteria and other regulation	IV.1 Agency Strategy until 2020	Appointment of a working group, preparation of a draft of the strategy, coordination of the proposal with internal and external stakeholders, adoption of the strategy for the period up to 2020	Technical members of the Agency staff and members of the Agency Council	Director	Fall 2016	Adoption by the end of 2016
	IV. 2 Proposal for new criteria for accreditation and external evaluation of higher education institutions and study programmes	Preparation of the first draft of the new criteria for accreditation and external evaluation of higher education institutions and study programmes and its processing at the Agency Council.	J. Širok K. Šubic B. Zupančič-Kočar M. Mravlja M. Bajuk Malešič M. Milas T. Horvat	T. Debevec		Starting points by Aug 2016 Proposal Oct 2016



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V. Information system and notifying	V.1 Establishment of a user-friendly information system (eNakvis)	Presentation of the new electronic forms for electronic applications in the eNakvis VZ system	J. Širok M. Mravlja B. Zupančič-Kočar M. Štuhec K. Šubic	A. Krček	Sept 2016	
		Prompt coordination of the changes of the forms with legislation changes and the changes of the criteria	A. Krček M. Mravlja Z. Sečnik	A. Krček	Permanent activity	

Note: The list of participants in the activities is not final and may change if necessary.

CONCLUSION

2016 will be, because of the still extensive scope of the Agency's activities which is performed according to the law and other legal acts of the Agency (evaluations and accreditations of institutions and study programmes), devoted to the international affirmation of the Agency. However, we are advocating for a change of higher education legislation to happen as soon as possible (first the act amending HEA, followed by an act regarding the Agency).

In addition to accreditations and external evaluations of higher education institutions and numerous study programmes and external evaluations of higher vocational colleges, the activities of the Agency are mostly:

- assuring an uninterrupted operation of the Agency, mainly the resolution of the financial and staffing situation in 2016 – as well as the adoptions of budgetary changes for 2017 and the proposed budget for 2018;
- active participation in the changes of higher education legislation;
- final implementation the comprehensive information system of the Agency;
- adoption of obligations upon joining the ENQA;
- assuring the implementation of the revised ESG standards and guidelines – change of the criteria;
- permanent training of candidates for entry into the register of experts and training of members of the Agency Council;
- fruitful cooperation with stakeholders in higher education and higher vocational education at workshops and professional consultations;
- permanent advisory service upon current issues – answers to info@nakvis.si;
- participation in international and domestic projects, related with the Agency's work;
- cooperation with foreign agencies;
- collecting data from higher education institutions, higher vocational colleges, experts and other stakeholders regarding the work of the Agency, analysis of survey questionnaires and adoption of actions for improvements based on the findings of the survey;
- planned participation at various conferences, consultations and workshops at home and abroad.

Of great importance will be the gaining of trust of all stakeholders and the general public for the work of the Agency and the enhancing its visibility.

The Agency shall continue to strive to assure and improve its own quality which is the basis for an efficient, generally recognized system of external quality assurance in higher education and higher vocational education, agreed upon with all stakeholders.

In Ljubljana, July 2016.

Ivan Leban