

ENQA and its member agencies – what have we learned from the ENQA Agency Reviews?

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Brussels, June 2018

ENQA

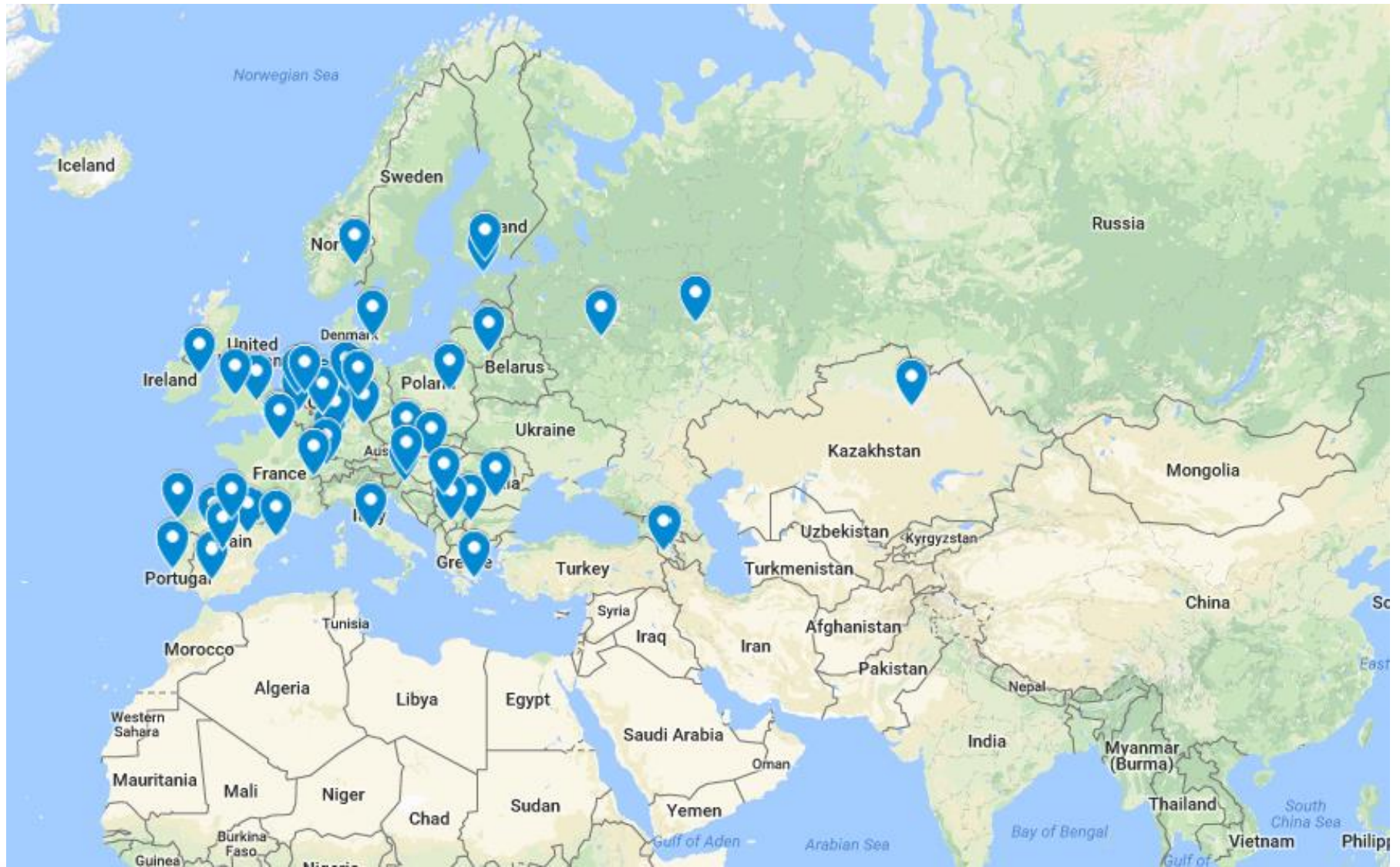
The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

A membership and representative organisation of QA agencies in the EHEA (founded by agencies (in 2000); governed by agencies)

- **51 members** from **28 European countries**
- 55 affiliates from 31 countries

An external review against the **ESG is a prerequisite** to become a member of ENQA / for renewal of ENQA membership (every 5 years).

ENQA – member agencies (51 in 28 countries)



Strategy 2016-2020

- ENQA is **representative of the diversity** of quality assurance agencies throughout Europe
- ENQA **supports the continuous development** of independent and trustworthy quality assurance agencies operating in line with agreed standards throughout Europe
- ENQA **provides advice and represents the interests** of its members in the policy-making process
- ENQA is the **preferred partner for reviews** against agreed European standards
- ENQA is a **key source** of reliable information, expertise and know-how on quality assurance
- ENQA contributes to the **enhancement and innovation of quality assurance**

Revised model for ENQA Agency Reviews

- **Clearer**, better-**structured**, more **efficient**, and more **useful** approach to external quality assurance of QA agencies
- **Revised guidelines**



GUIDELINES FOR ENQA AGENCY REVIEWS

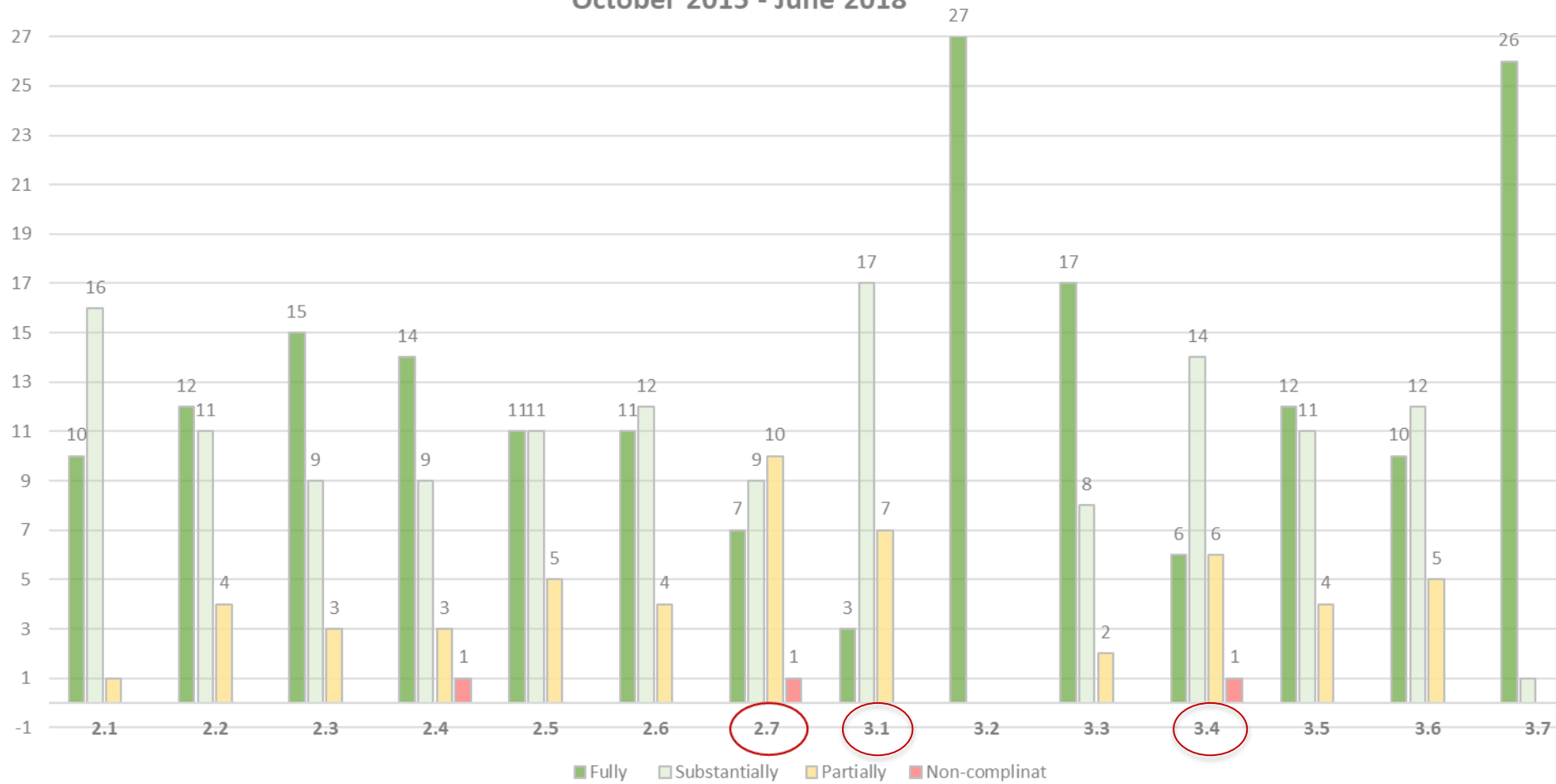


So...

What have we learned about
ENQA member agencies
from the reviews?



Judgements on compliance October 2015 - June 2018



What works well

- External QA processes reliable, useful, implemented consistently: SAR, site visit, report, follow-up **(ESG 2.3)**
- Outcomes are based on explicit and published criteria that are applied consistently **(ESG 2.5)**
- Official status. Agencies are formally recognised and their outcomes accepted by public authorities **(ESG 3.2)**
- Most agencies carefully safeguard their independence, they have full responsibility for their operations and outcomes without third party influence **(ESG 3.3)**
- Cyclical external reviews **(ESG 3.7)**



Areas for further development

- Clearly defined **complaints and appeals** processes (ESG 2.7)
- Clear and explicit **goals and objectives** translating into the daily work; involvement of **stakeholders** in agencies' governance and work (ESG 3.1)
- **Thematic analysis** – analysis of general findings from QA activities showing trends and areas of good practice or persistent difficulties (ESG 3.4)



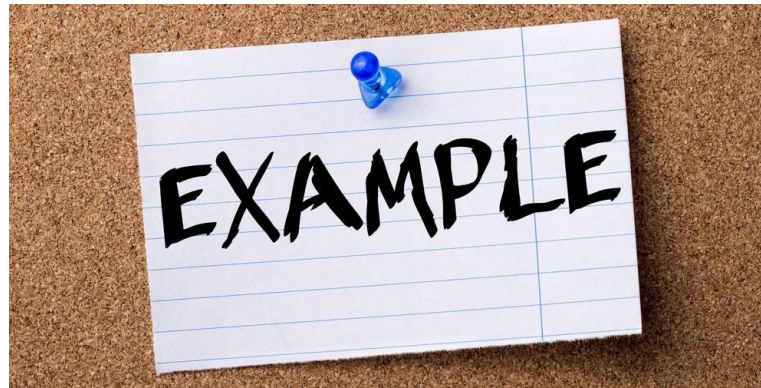
ESG 2.7 Complaints and appeals

Became more demanding – from guideline to standard, scope extended.

Possibility to **appeal any formal decision** – agency should have a predefined process for that.

Possibility to **complain** – to raise any issues of concern e.g. to state dissatisfaction about the conduct of the process. Also a predefined process.

Even if the procedure leads to recommendations and **no decisions**, there should be a possibility to **contest the outcomes and procedures** such as conduct of people involved e.g. experts, staff of the Agency etc.



Procedures within the agency

While HEIs have an access to the judicial system to contest the decisions, agencies are expected to have an internal step allowing institutions to question the formal outcomes with the agency first before taking legal action.

Impartiality

Not a real appeal if it is dealt by people who also take the decisions. There is a lack of real possibility to appeal the decision in such cases.

ESG 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

There should be a clear **link** between agency's **mission, strategy** and **annual work plans** (strategy should **translate into the daily work** of the agency).

Stakeholder involvement in the **governance** and **work**.

Complexity of this standard – all elements should be covered not taking some of them for granted.

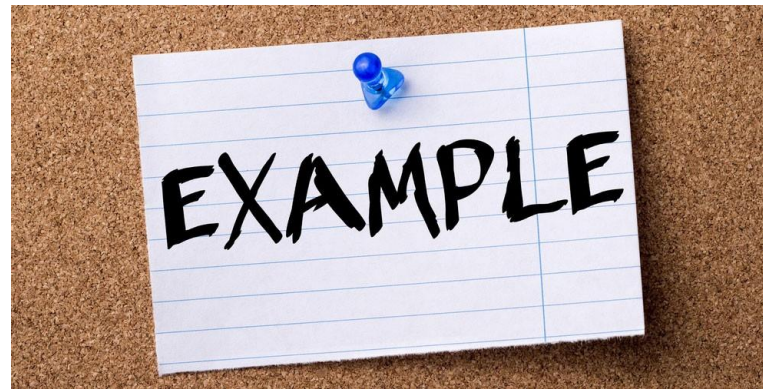


ESG 3.4 Thematic analysis

Reports should present the **general findings of EQA activities** and not any other kind of information about the agency or its performance.

The **regularity** of the reports can depend on the scope of the agency's activities, but the agency should have a **clear plan for when and how to carry out these analysis**, e.g. at the end of each review cycle; after each cluster of evaluations; selecting thematic topics (how?) every 3-4-5 years, etc.

Thematic analysis should **feed back to the stakeholders and society**.



Content

Factual and descriptive annual reports presenting general activities do not qualify as thematic analysis.

Regularity

Issues in undertaking thematic analysis proactively as a regular function of the agency. Ideally not only ad hoc projects.

Somebody else's responsibility?

It is not an argument that somebody else in the system carries out such analysis, each agency should find a way to also contribute and analyse its general findings.





Thank you!

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