

Initial regional meeting of experts in Quality Assurance in general education

25th May 2017, Belgrade

The regional meeting on Quality Assurance in general education was attended by 22 participants, representatives of relevant institutions from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia. (For detailed list of participating institutions and representatives please see Annex 1). The meeting was also attended by the representative of the European Commission, the coordinator of the Education and Training 2020 Working Groups on Schools, Ms Hannah Grainger-Clemson.

The purpose of the meeting was

- To present recent development in the area of QA in general education at the European level
- To compare the QA aspects existing in the region and their understanding
- To map the existing bodies involved in the QA aspects, their roles and responsibilities
- To identify common strengths and challenges
- To reach an agreement on the future cooperation areas
- To reach an agreement on next steps to be taken

After the welcome addresses given by Ms Šarić, ERI SEE Director, Mr Zoran Avramović and Branislav Randjelović, directors of Institute for the Improvement of Education and Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation respectively, Ms Hannah Grainger-Clemson explained the open method of coordination applied in the work of the ET 2020 WG for Schools and the priorities on which the group focuses.

After that the country QA experts presented the situation regarding QA aspects in their countries respectively, focusing on elements of internal and external quality assurance, steps taken so far and to be taken.

For presentations please see Annex 2.

TOPICS/NEEDS LISTED AS PRIORITY by participating countries:

- ASSURING QUALITY OF QA INSTITUTIONS AND SYSTEMS
 - International external evaluation of institutions in charge of the external evaluation of knowledge/introducing and assuring quality standards into institutions that are in charge of quality assurance in education
 - designing the recommendations for education policy makers and providing support to implementation and maintenance of ISO 9001 - Quality Management System in all educational institutions (including schools);
 - obtaining timely information on the issued standard ISO 21001 (possibly, Montenegro can be involved in the process of creating the standard. On its Technical Committee 017 “The quality of work in educational institutions”, it has been decided that Montenegro will only apply the issued standards, but it will not participate in their preparation);

- providing support to harmonization of ISO 21001 with national standards for external and internal evaluation;
 - Develop capacity building activities for the employees of institutions in charge of quality assurance (study visits, workshops), possibilities for sharing experiences in QA – for example taking part in external evaluation mission of other countries
 - Develop the regional set of trainings of trainers (e.g. 5 trainers per each country) on a certain subject – for example external evaluation and internal evaluation of schools, modifying the already existing model of one country and applying it to the region
 - Workshops/other types of activities on decentralization of the QA system
 - Workshops on the process of national exams development
 - developing and supporting the implementation of the regional “risk management system in education” that will use the available data to identify and predict possible challenges and enable early and appropriate response.
- DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS
 - Developing the “quality school” – defining the “standard of quality” for schools at regional level (development of the standards of managing a pre-school/school institution) and introducing it at national levels
 - Development of international standards for external evaluation of schools
 - Development of the standard for trainings of trainers of external evaluators
 - Development of the standard for the external evaluators
 - Certification of evaluators
 - initiating and participating in the development of standards for educational supervisors (at ISO, or at the regional level) and the requirements for their (re) licensing;
 - creating and implementing the regional training of trainers’ program for educational supervisors;
 - creating the training programs for newly appointed educational supervisors and advanced training program for the experienced educational supervisors;
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- SUPPORT TO EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN QA SYSTEMS:
 - Building capacities of staff for internal evaluation
 - Guidelines for the implementation of new curricula at school level
 - Guidelines for internal evaluation based on the new curricula
 - Sharing experiences on how to create climate that supports internal evaluation

CONCLUSIONS:

- The work of the regional meeting of QA experts gathered in Belgrade should be continued
- It is suggested that the work of the regional QA experts in this QA group is formalized (in a way of formal nominations on behalf of the institutions’ heads)
- Communication among members should become more often and regular, and focus should be on sharing experiences in QA – taking part in external evaluation mission of other countries, study visits..., more discussions
- Next meeting of the group should focus on 1 particular theme and go into more depth

- The participants are to send their feedback on the conclusions within the 7 days and invited to bring other topics on board
- After receiving final input from the participants, ERI SEE is to prepare the questionnaire based on the input received on the topics/needs of interest and analyze the data, reaching a conclusion on which topic is of most relevance for all the countries
- ERI SEE is to further explore the possibilities of using TAIEX instrument for further activities of the QA expert group.
- The subject of Continuous Professional Development is to be dealt with within another sub-group of the QA working group, which would specifically be focusing on the matters within this area
- QA country experts are invited to send contact details to ERI SEE of persons in charge of teacher trainings in their respective countries and inform them they will be officially contacted by ERI SEE for the purpose of establishing a sub-group focusing exclusively on the Continuous professional development of teachers / teacher trainings.