

**Skill up with the INQAAHE ISGs:**

**Building a scope for organizational  
quality  
enhancement continuum**

**a hands-on workshop to make innovation  
an everyday habit at your organization**



**FACILITATORS:**

**Dr. Susanna Karakhanyan, Dr. Anna Prades y Dr. Ariana De Vincenzi**

**10<sup>th</sup> of June 2024**

**- BUCHAREST -**



## Photo & Video Disclaimer

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# Ground Rules



Keep phones on  
silent mode



Be open to new ideas  
& challenges



Be proactive: explore,  
ask questions & reflect



Be open to diverse ideas  
and see how to make  
best use of it



Keep to the set timing



# Agenda for today

**Welcome & Introductions**

**The learning paradigm shift & recent trends in evaluation of evaluators**

**Let's zoom into the core: internal quality assurance**

**Quality enhancement continuum: the framework**

**Design-thinking session**

**The INQAAHE ISGs and Procedures**

**Reflections & feedback**





# Introducing the facilitators



Dr. Susanna  
Karakhanyan

**Main area of expertise:**

Educational policymaking, governance, quality assurance, assessment & measurement

**Main contributions:**

International TE & QA systems, diverse tertiary education systems globally, working with ~ 40 governments (WB, ADB, UNESCO, CoE expert) and QA globally, lead author of the INQAAHE ISGs

**Education & Research Background:**

M.S.Ed from UPENN, the USA  
PhD in Social Sciences, Radboud University, the Netherlands; Research interests (HE policymaking, governance, QA, TLA)  
Lead author of the INQAAHE Global Studies in QA



Dr. Anna  
Prades

**Main area of expertise:**

Quality assurance, assessment, employability and performance indicators

**Main contributions:**

Catalan data management system of performance indicators (quality, survey, equity, etc.), lead-co-author of the INQAAHE ISGs

**Education & Research Background:**

Bachelor in Psychology , PhD in Education (2005) from the University of Barcelona. LLL in Data Analysis. Research projects (.g., internal and external QA, use-cases of micro-credentials).  
Lead author of the Western European QA Chapter in the INQAAHE II Global Studies.



Dr. Ariana  
De Vincenzi

**Main area of expertise:**

University leadership, quality assurance development & assessment

**Main contributions:**

Organizational transformation and enhancement of universities, across LATAM, INQAAHE GGP/ISG  
Reviewer

**Education & Research Background:**

M.S. in Educational Management & Ph.D. in Education San Andres University (Argentina). Authored books & publications on quality teaching in HE.  
Lead author of the LAC QA Chapter in the INQAAHE II Global Studies.

# What to expect...



## Who is this workshop for?

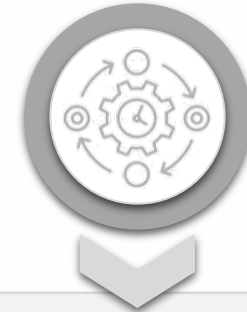
Responsible of internal and external quality assurance systems.

TEIs and QA bodies.



## What are the expected learning outcomes?

- Analyze elements critical for development of an internal quality assurance that contribute to efficiency, relevance, and transformative power.
- Integrate principles of “enhancement continuum”
  - into the internal quality assurance system.



## How shall we get there?

*Design-thinking workshop: hands-on techniques for development, implementation and cyclical evaluation of an internal quality assurance system.*

*Lessons learnt and a case study on evaluation of external QA bodies against the INQAAHE's ISGs.*



The learning paradigm  
shift & recent trends in  
evaluation of evaluators



# Global trends & key impact factors



Geopolitics



Socio-economic



Technology



International & Regional soft regulations



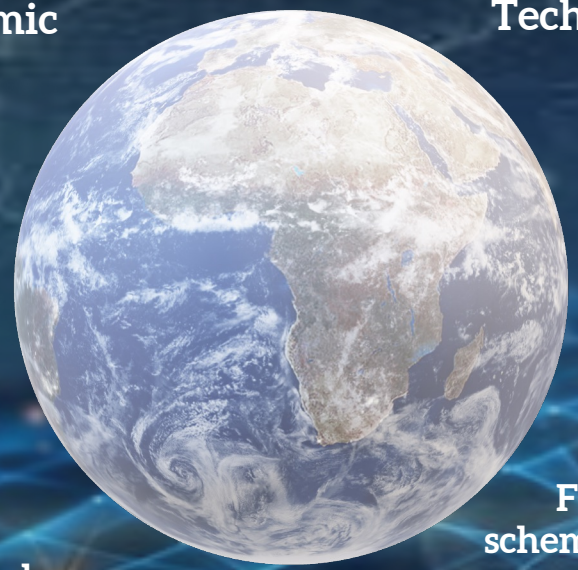
Culture specifics



Contextual peculiarities



Value System



Human capital

Funding schemes/triggers



Legal & Regulatory Frameworks





## The Industrial Age

## The Information Age

### LEARNING

Currency of education: transfer of information & knowledge  
 Curriculum driven  
 Teacher centered  
 Seat-time equivalency  
 Physical learning environment  
 Standard qualification credentials  
 Fixed learning pathway  
 Theory driven/imparting information  
 Assessment for credentialing



Currency of education: problem-solving, basic skills development, wisdom, and insight  
 Learner driven  
 Learner centered  
 Competency based learning  
 Innovative learning environments, including online spaces  
 Diversification of credentials in types, sizes and providers  
 Flexible learning pathways  
 Practice ready  
 Assessment for learning

### ORGANIZATION

Bureaucracy driven  
 Centralized control  
 Compliance & conformity  
 Quality Assurance for control purposes



Team-based/collegial  
 Autonomy balanced with accountability  
 Diversity/thinking outside the box  
 Quality Assurance as integral part of the organization/authentic quality culture

### GOVERNANCE

Autocratic decision -making  
 Anecdotal decisions/"pet projects"  
 Compartmentalization  
 Strategic planning obsolescence  
 Fragmentated policies and procedures



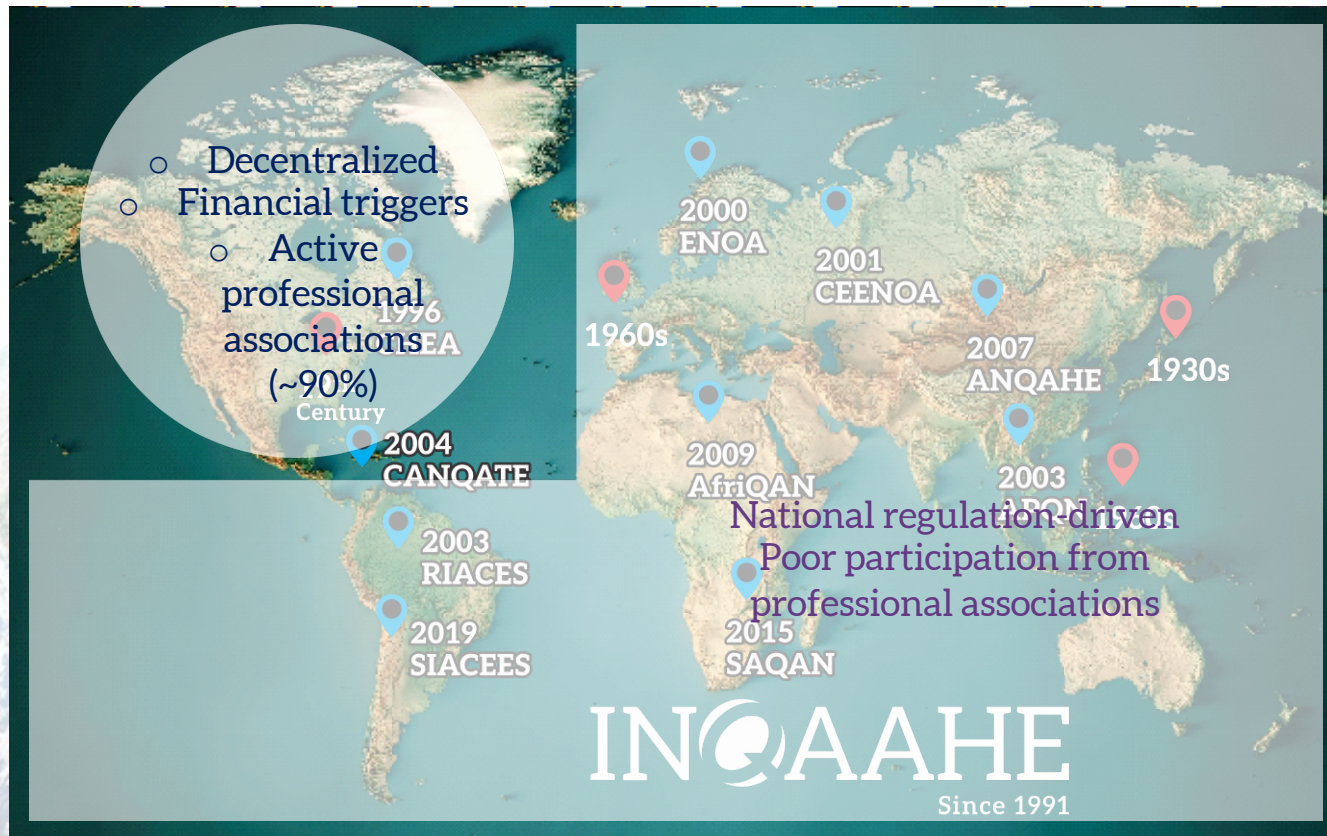
Shared decision-making  
 Data-driven decision-making  
 Holism  
 Feasible strategies, implementation supported by robust QA  
 Coherent and holistic policy frameworks

**How do we, as QA, equip ourselves to face the paradigm shift?**



- Ever more diversity in QA models
- Fit-for-purpose for TEI and national systems
- Ensuring continuous enhancement

## The QA Landscape Globally: some facts



### HISTORICALLY:

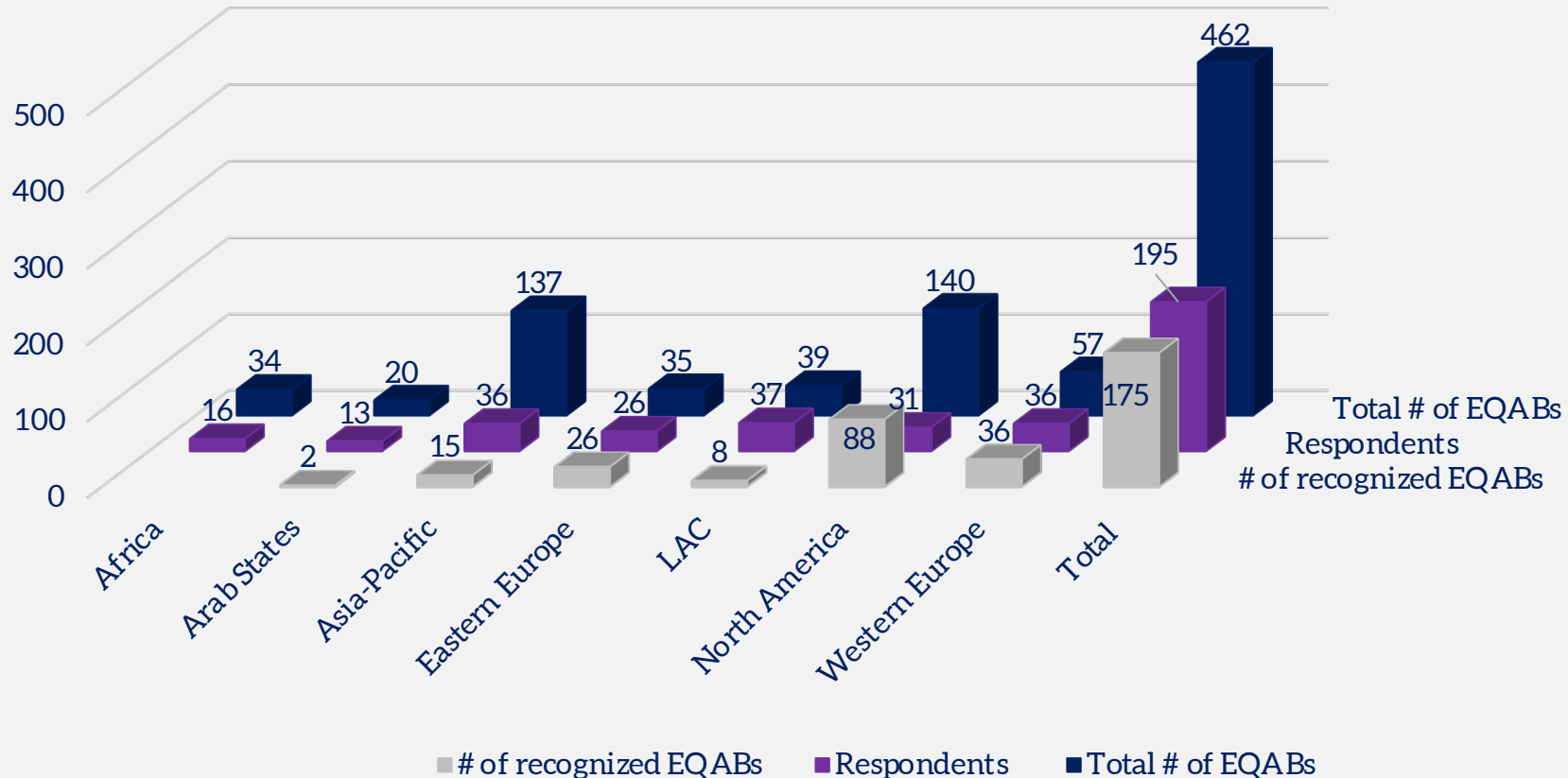
- The first experience with accreditations started end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the USA.
- In the 1930s it started in Japan, hence expanding to the Philippines and the UK in the 1960s and beyond, with 1980s marking massification of QA.
- First evaluation of evaluators was launched in the USA in 1965.
- First network established was the INQAAHE in 1991, followed by regional and other special interest networks.

### Currently, there are ~ 462 QA providers and ~17 QA regional and special interest networks globally:

- The highest number of EQABs per region falls in North America (~140) followed by Asia Pacific (137), and Europe (Eastern & Western ) to 92.
- Evaluation of evaluators is rapidly expanding with Europe and the USA being leaders in the practice and other regions increasing the pace.
- Diversification in definitions, expectations, provisions, measurement methodologies and QA solutions is a growing trend.
- Cross-boarder accreditation/quality assurance has become a norm.
- The role of QA and accreditation has been expanding and QA is increasingly impacted by political and other factors.



## The Global Landscape



~ 462 EQABs operate globally which is an increase in ~39% (332) as compared to the data in I Global Study (2017-2020)

Accreditors with professional association background are predominantly based in North America (~90%), to some extent in Europe and less so in Asia-Pacific.

Only 37% of overall EQABs have been externally evaluated (recognized), with Europe (Eastern & Western) and North America leading in the number of externally evaluated (recognized) EQABs

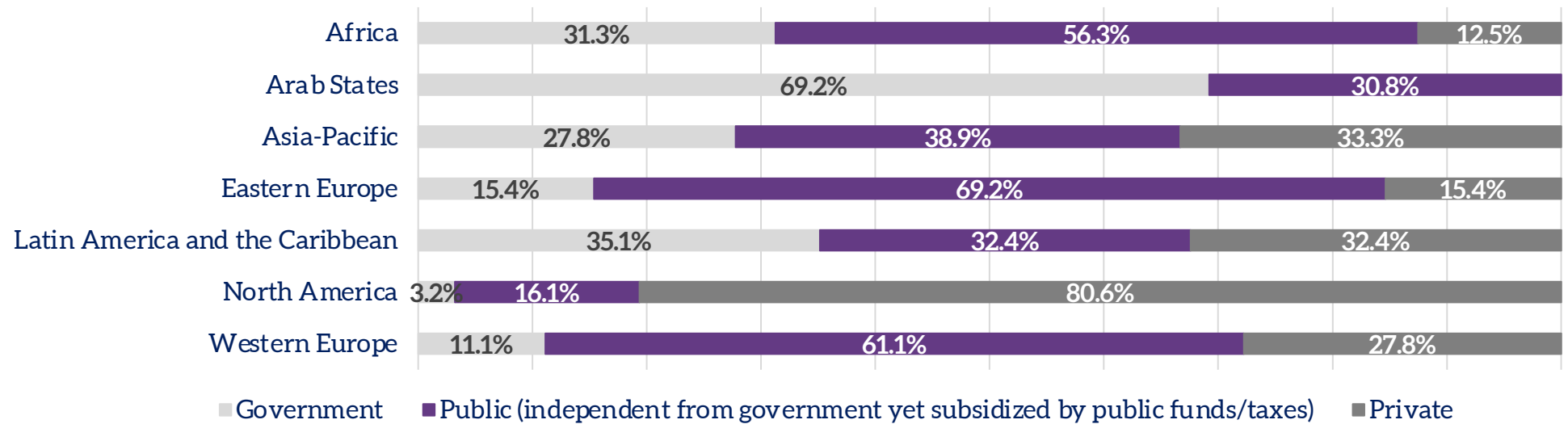
~ 15% (30) of countries globally are yet to establish EQA practices at national level with majority of them in Africa

195 (42%) of EQABs participated in the II Global Study as compared to 106 (32%) in I Global Study (2020)

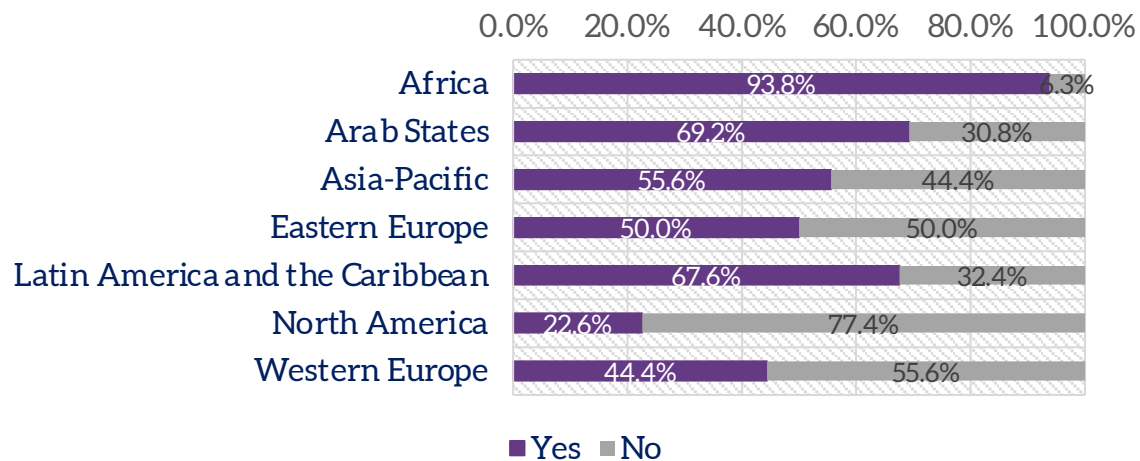
**Disclaimer:** the data presented is still in the process of verification, cleaning and validation

## Legal status

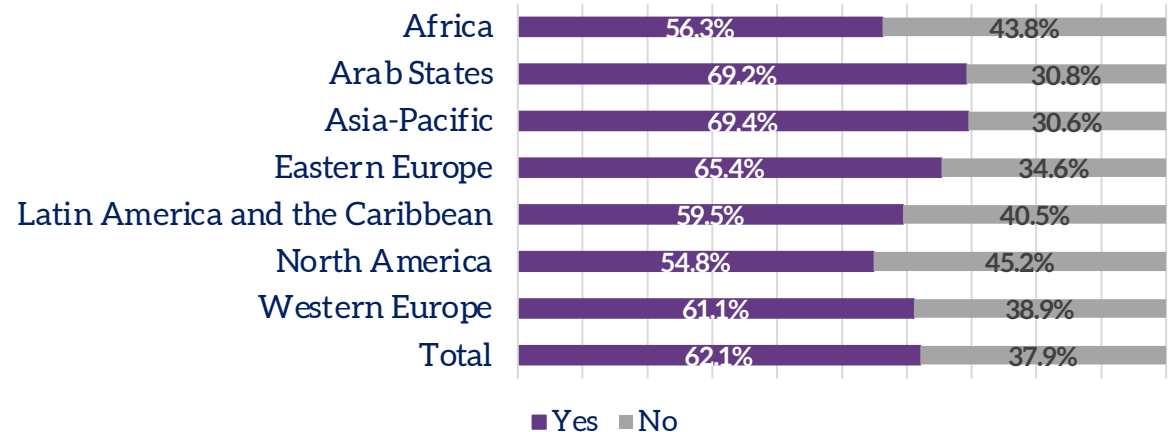
North America, unlike other regions, is characterized by private provisions predominantly, whereas in Arab States only government and public EQABs operate



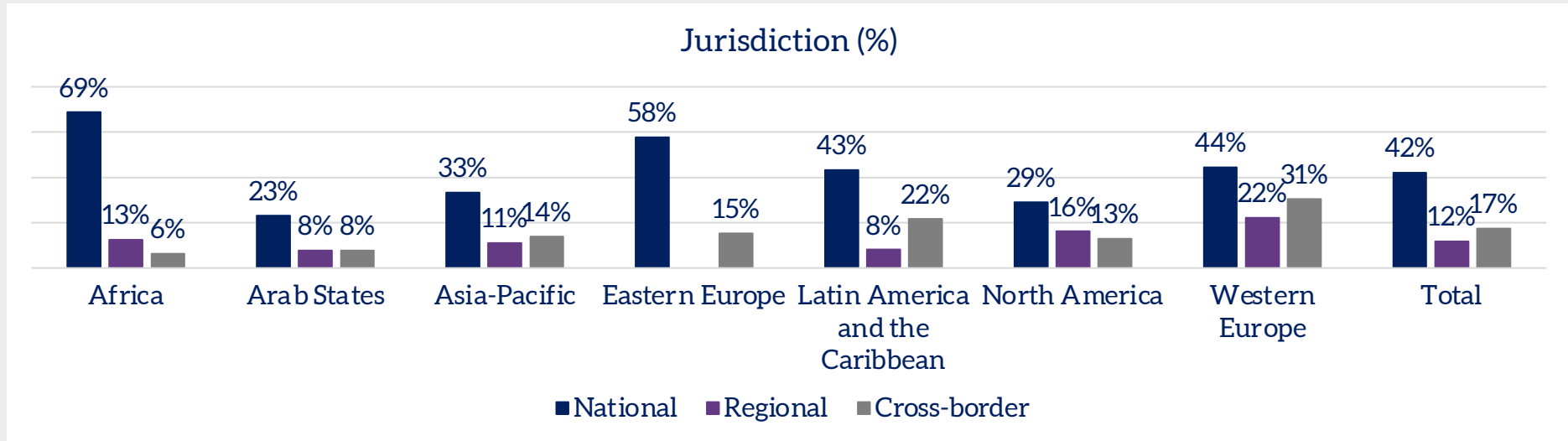
## Regulatory function



## External EQAP recognized by National Regulator



Based on the number of responses to this particular question



Overall expansion in all types of EQA provisions is observed throughout all the regions

Still...

- Majority of QA bodies (42%) operate at national level
- 17 % of the respondents operate across the borders, which is a significant decrease from 28% in 2020 study
- 12% conduct reviews at regional level

Predominant nature of external reviews at national level demonstrates the key role EQA plays in education policymaking.

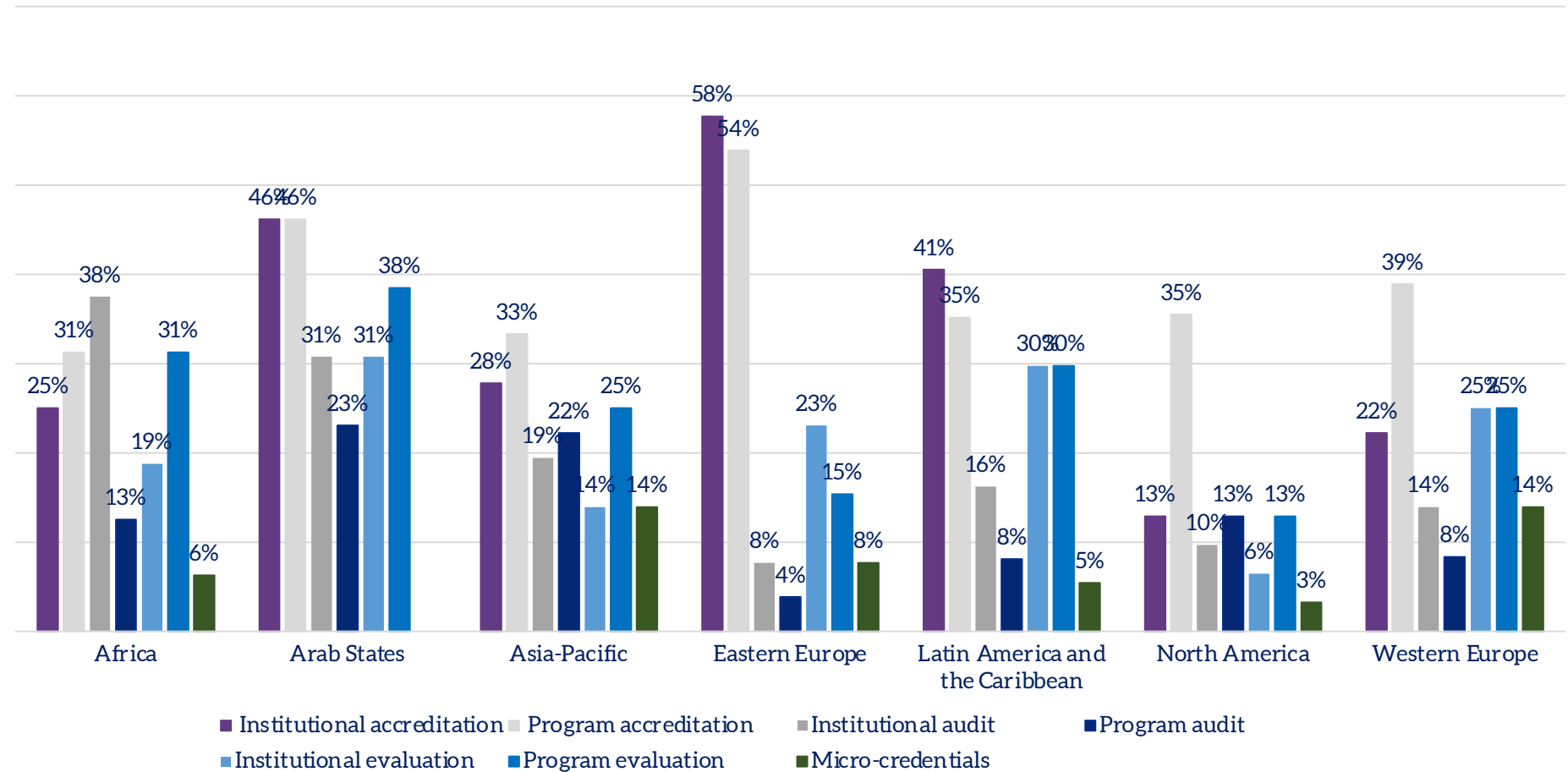
Politicizing trend is also growing.



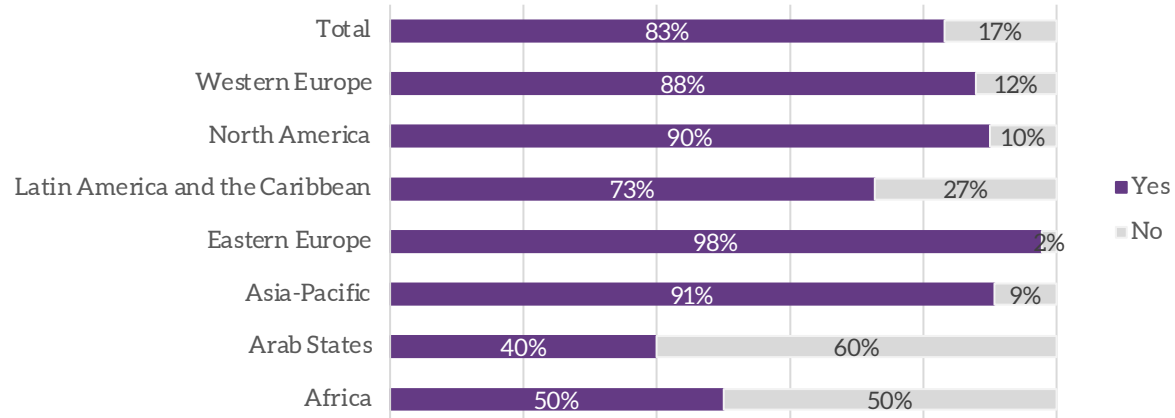
## Types of external review



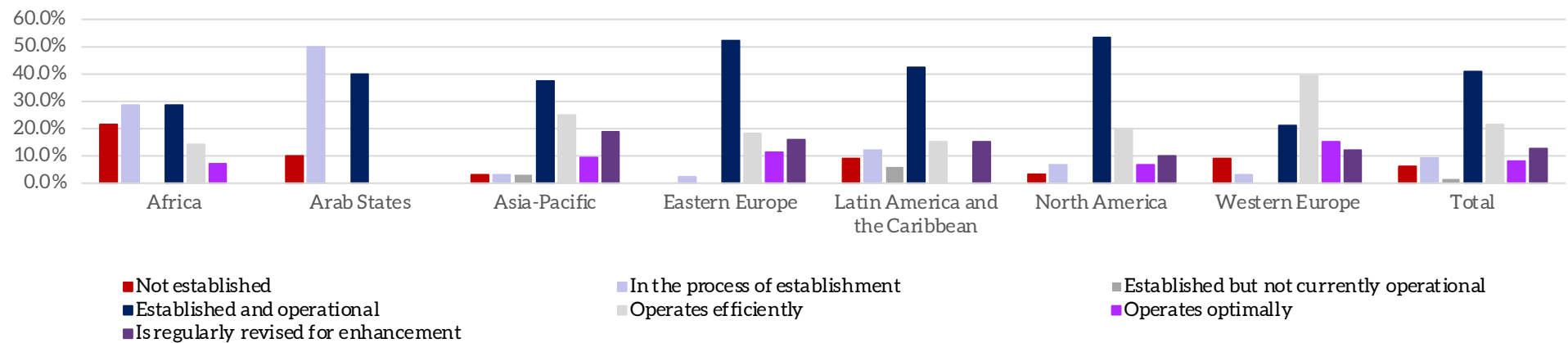
## Types of external review per region (%)



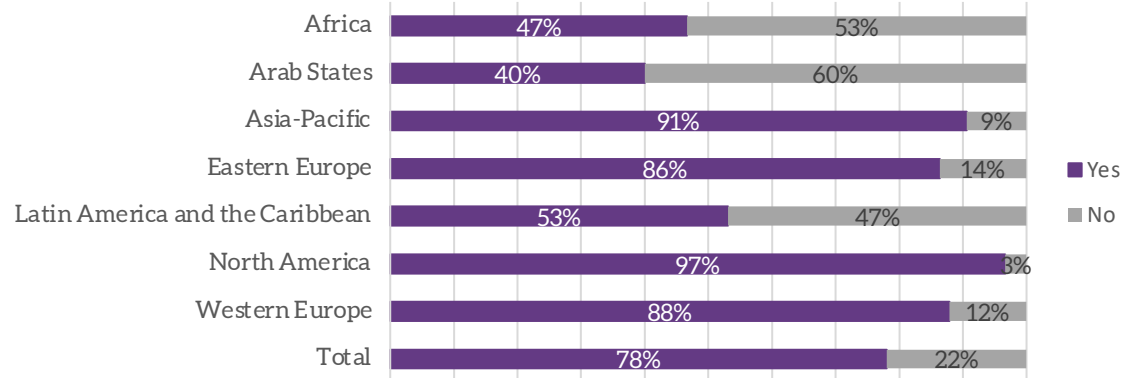
## IQA Policy in place



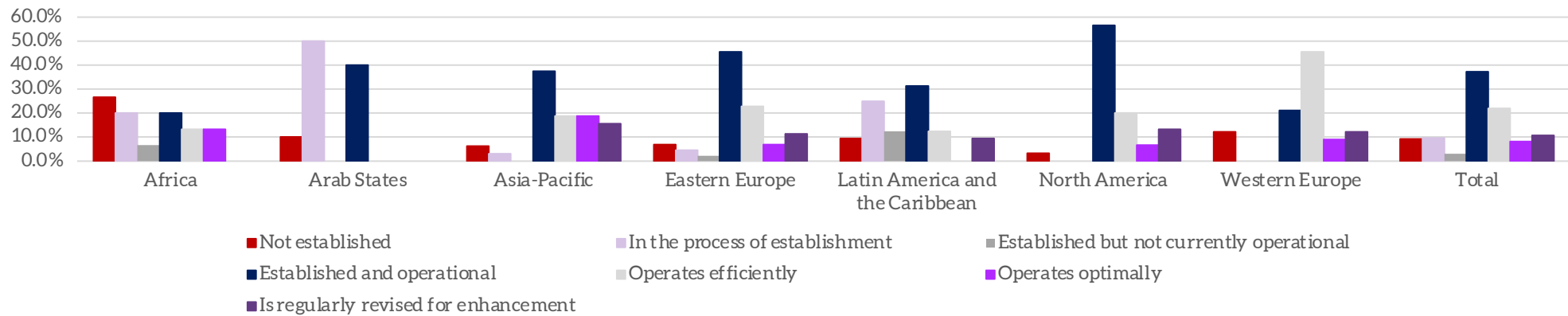
## To what extent is the IQA policy in place?



## IQA system for EQA in place



## To what extent is the IQA system for EQAP in place?





## IQA challenges: initial findings from II Global Study

**Lack of Quality culture in TEIs:** Reluctance of faculty members and leadership to meaningfully engage in IQA. Need for capacity building to interpret standards. TEIs need to overtake the responsibility for QA.

“Internal mechanisms at some HEI's are not functional the whole time and sometimes they are more like ad hoc mechanisms which only becomes functional when we go for evaluation purpose”.

**Expert training\clarity of standards:** ensuring consistent interpretation by expert panels.

**Financial resources:** constraints due to the rising inflation, deployment of expert to remote areas; constraints faced by HEIs.

**Legal framework as a barrier:** constant changes, multiple demands from regulators, etc.



Challenged  
EFFICIENCY

**Stakeholder Engagement:** Involving various stakeholders, including faculty, students, parents, and administrators.

**Diversity & Flexibility** to context and communities. Need for flexible standards, adaptable to changes in curriculum, technology.

Balancing the need for standardized assessment with the recognition of diverse learning environments and student populations.  
**Relevance of programs to labor market needs,** to the rapidly evolving educational practices and technologies, to the diversity of systems.

**Lack of resources:** time and human resources for dissemination and communication on quality issues in general.



Challenged  
RELEVANCE

**Relevance** to new realities such as digital learning, SDGs.

**New areas of evaluation:** third mission, research.

**New needs:** student centered learning/competence-based learning, cross-border quality assurance.

**New objectives (DEI)** assuring equal and fair treatment of students and graduates.

**Assessment of intangible outcomes:** LOs, community engagement, innovation...



Does QA actually  
have  
TRANSFORMATIVE  
POWER?



Let's zoom into the core:  
internal quality assurance

# Share your ideas to enhance an IQA system

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ACTIVITY

- Discuss and solve the following three prompts with the members of your roundtable.
- Assign a facilitator who will foster an open discussion & summarizes the ideas.

## PROMPTS:

Discuss and agree on:

- 5 key elements needed to enhance your organization's IQA System.
- 5 most significant challenges you face in promoting a continuous quality enhancement process in your organization.
- 5 effective strategies to foster a culture of continuous quality enhancement in your organization.



## Continuous improvement of IQA systems



1. Definition of QA strategy in line with the institutional strategy.
2. Leadership commitment to quality enhancement.
3. Adequate resource allocation ( time, money personnel).
4. Integration and coherence between processes and tools to enable transformations.
5. Data-driven governance as baseline for internal quality assurance.
6. Meaningful stakeholder engagement.
7. Robust quality culture ensuring engagement and innovative practices.
8. Guaranteed transparency and integrity in IQA functions and operations.
9. Multiple measurement methods for promoting transformative impact on TE system: reactive vs pro-active approach.
10. Proactive engagement in international QA community to continuously learn and enhance practices, hence contribute to the body of knowledge.





**Quality enhancement  
continuum:  
the framework**

## ISG Framework

<p><b>Module I</b> (mandatory)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The External Quality Assurance Provider</li> <li>- The EQAP's framework for external review of quality of TEPs</li> <li>- EQAP's Review of TE Providers: Evaluation, Decision Making and Appeals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Internationalization and External Relations</li> <li>- Integrity, Disclosure and Transparency</li> <li>- Stakeholder role and engagement</li> </ul>
<p><b>Module II</b> (cross border)</p>	<p>Module 2.1: Cross-border tertiary education Module 2.2: Cross-border quality assurance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mandate</li> <li>- Policies and procedures</li> <li>- Relevance of standards</li> <li>- Resources</li> <li>- Recognition</li> </ul>
<p><b>Module III</b> (short learning program)</p>	<p>QA providers that accredit short learning programs offered by formal and non-formal providers</p>	
<p><b>Module IV</b> (online/blended)</p>	<p>QA providers that accredit online and blended HE provisions</p>	

## ISG Modular Approach: purpose

*“6 GGP-course-menu” to “a-la-carte ISGs”  
through a modular approach:*

- To tailor to diverse needs.
- To promote an enhanced fitness-for-purpose of recognition practices.
- To ensure inclusion.
- To promote relevance.
- To recognize QA providers and best practices benefiting the target areas.
- To encourage innovative approaches to QA.
- To enable deep learning in specified areas.

**2.1** *Cross-border quality assurance:* applies to external quality assurance providers that conduct external reviews across country borders/jurisdictions.

**2.2** *Quality assurance of cross-border education:* applies to external quality assurance providers that conduct quality assurance of cross-border education (nationally or across borders).




**3** *Quality assurance of short learning programmes:* applies to external quality assurance providers that conduct reviews/accreditation of short learning programmes (e.g. micro-credentials)

**4** *Quality assurance of online and blended modalities of distance education:* applies to distance education that is online or blended. Other forms of distance education are addressed within the baseline standards








## The ISGs III: the key principles

	<b>Efficiency</b> 	<b>Relevance</b> 	<b>Transformation</b> 
Functional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Capacity to achieve its goals with minimal resource usage.</li> <li>- Objectives are achieved economically.</li> <li>- Complementary &amp; supplementary measurement mechanisms.</li> <li>- Driven by core values of TE.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The standards and procedures are relevant.</li> <li>- Capacity to demonstrate relevance in the outcomes.</li> <li>- Meaningful stakeholder engagement.</li> <li>- Core values of TE are measured and prove to be relevant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The EQA measures demonstrate transformative impact: behavior, processes, products.</li> <li>- Deep and pervasive.</li> <li>- Intentional and occurs over time.</li> <li>- Continuity &amp; sustainability.</li> </ul>
Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Robust IQA of the EQAP.</li> <li>- Enhanced efficiency in TE operations through robust TE IQA.</li> <li>- QA driven decision-making.</li> <li>- Core values are embedded in the IQA.</li> <li>- Evidenced by clear KPIs (e.g., cost-benefit).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhanced relevance at system level.</li> <li>- Key stakeholders are the driving force for the QA enhancement.</li> <li>- Relevant international expertise.</li> <li>- QA is aligned with the systemic frameworks.</li> <li>- Core values are embedded in all the activities and are relevant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High degree of integration of the EQAP's tools and technologies enable transformations.</li> <li>- Continuous improvement and enhancement of IQA's transformative power.</li> <li>- Transformative power of the values is tangible.</li> </ul>
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Efficient financial management.</li> <li>- Core values contribute to enhanced efficiency.</li> <li>- Adequate resources for efficient management (org &amp; system) are secured.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial management enables relevance (org &amp; system).</li> <li>- Pertinent values are embedded and contribute to relevance.</li> <li>- Relevant capacity to respond to the systemic needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial management enables the relevant transformations.</li> <li>- Core values are tangible in the transformative processes.</li> <li>- Strong track of records of transformative power on the system.</li> </ul>
Systemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potentials to promote systemic efficiency.</li> <li>- Link with relevant processes (e.g., licensing).</li> <li>- Efficiency in addressing systemic needs.</li> <li>- The core values have efficient impact.</li> <li>- Efficiency of the TE system is measured.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The standards &amp; procedures promote relevance of TE to socio-economic needs.</li> <li>- The values contribute to TE relevance.</li> <li>- QA drives national strategies on TE.</li> <li>- Tangible evidence of continuous stakeholder engagement steers TE towards fulfilling societal needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Capacity to contribute to a QA body of knowledge and community.</li> <li>- The core values transform quality culture.</li> <li>- Tangible evidence of systemic transformations (e.g., KPIs like enhanced student performance, improved employability).</li> </ul>

## The ISGs III: the sources of evidence

	Efficiency 	Relevance 	Transformation 
Functional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic planning monitoring.</li> <li>- Reviews undertaken considering feedback about the burden required for the procedures.</li> <li>- Stakeholder mechanisms of participation, stakeholder opinion.</li> <li>- Meta-assessments of review procedures include system impact.</li> <li>- Communication Plan, Publications (Codes of Good Practice, White Papers...) Seminars, Conferences.</li> </ul>		
Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Internal Quality Assurance System.</li> <li>- Milestones of EQAP and TE system performance.</li> </ul>		
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sources and volume of funding.</li> <li>- The cost of "quality assurance" in the context of the spending budget of the system in which it operates.</li> <li>- Capacity of analytical funding analysis.</li> <li>- Profile of staff, collaborators, decision bodies involved, (national\international profile).</li> <li>- Distribution of costs by activity.</li> </ul>		
Systemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mandate\procedures linked to socio-economy needs of the system.</li> <li>- Meta-assessment, research, publications, knowledge generation.</li> <li>- Regional\National\International institutional outreach.</li> <li>- Thematic/system-wide and other systemic analysis.</li> </ul>		

# Quality Enhancement Continuum: the guiding principles

## The QEC uses:

- **Diagnostic:** EQAP identifies strengths and areas of enhancement against the three principles.
- **Formative:** External review panel assess EQAP's capacity and impact on efficiency, relevance and transformative power.
- The assessment against the quality enhancement guidelines is summative, carried out as a culmination of the EQAP's assessment once all the evidence has been reviewed.
- The final output includes summative recommendations and commendations for the EQAP's guidance on enhancement.

*The QEC is designed to enable both diagnostic and formative assessment of an EQAP's performance, including self- and external review of EQAPs, and is based on a continuous improvement approach designed to move the focus from compliance with organizational performance standards to gauging the impact on tertiary education and, ultimately, assessing the transformations driving student learning and society at large.*



**QEC IS DESIGNED TO BE FIT FOR ANY TYPE OF IQA IN HE:  
TEIS AND EQAPS**





Let's do it together ...

Design-Thinking Session



## DURING the workshop

**2** **DEFINITION:** Write a detailed problem statement.

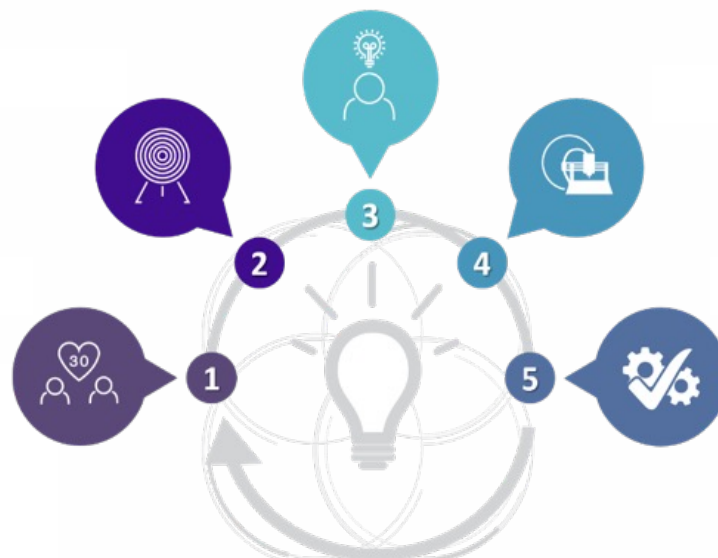
What are the specific issues in an IQA system that need to be resolved to enhance the efficiency, relevance and transformative capacity of an organization?.

**1** **EMPATHY:** Let's get into the shoes of stakeholders

What needs, wants, feelings, expectations do they express about the existing QA?.

**3** **IDEATION:** *Brainstorm*

What innovative ideas can address the key problems identified to build up an efficient, relevant and transformative IQA system?.



## BACK at your organization

**4** **PROTOTYPING:**

Creating solutions for your organization will be your challenge upon your return.

**5** **TESTING:**

Implementing the solutions to the detected problems will be your greatest contribution for the continuous enhancement.

## The Set Up: rules of the session



- **1. Format:** The Design Thinking session will consist of three 10-minute rounds. At the end of the 10 minutes, each member of the group moves to a different new table.
- **2. Table Hosts:** Host remains at that the same table to carry over the ideas, the rest will move to other tables of their choice. The Table Host will brief the new group on the previous round of discussions for no more than 2 minutes.
- **3. Doodle Sketches:** Each table has facilities to draw doodle sketches. The idea is each group will take over developments of the previous group and build up the system. Through 4 iterations the system should be ready.
- **4. Questions:** Each round of discussions evolves around a specific **question the responses to which should be reflected on the doodle sketches**. The 3 questions build upon each other logically.
- **5. Outputs:** After the 3 rounds are complete, the Table Hosts will be invited to summarize the outcomes for each table with the support of the Facilitators.

Try to be open to diverse perspectives and listen to understand and appreciate diversity





**4**

## **The INQAAHE ISGs and Procedures**

A hand is holding a magnifying glass over a white surface. The words "CASE STUDY" are printed in large, bold, black letters on the white surface. The magnifying glass is positioned over the text, making it appear larger and more prominent. The background is a blurred wooden surface.

# *Taiwan Assessment and Evaluation Association*

**The TWAEA Case**

**First ISG Review**



## International Standards and Guidelines of QA in Higher Education: the essence



### Baseline Standards (mandatory)

All types of QA providers

### Specific standards to tailor to the profile of a QA provider (electives)

**Cross-border:**  
Cross-border HE  
Cross border QA

**Short Learning  
Programs (micro-  
credentials)**

**Online/Blended  
Provisions**

### Quality Enhancement Continuum: the guiding principles

Efficiency

Relevance

Transformation

The scope of the external review will be defined based on the profile of the quality assurance or accreditation body.

➤ Section 1: Baseline standards that relate to all quality assurance providers and accreditors regardless of their specific field of operations.

➤ Section 2: Sets of selective modules of standards to cater to specific profiles of EQAPs, enabling due recognition of the increasing diversity of QA providers.

➤ Section 3: *Guiding principles* to promote continuous enhancement and impact of EQAPs as per maturity level.



# INQAAHE offers three types of EQAB recognition pathways

## Pathway 1: REVIEW

Through an evaluation carried out by INQAAHE

- Self evaluation against the EQAB's mission and the INQAAHE ISGs.
- An external review organized by INQAAHE.
- A decision on alignment.
- Award of the label.
- Inclusion in the register of ISG aligned EQABs.

## Pathway 2: JOINT REVIEW

Through an evaluation carried out jointly by INQAAHE and another reputable external evaluator

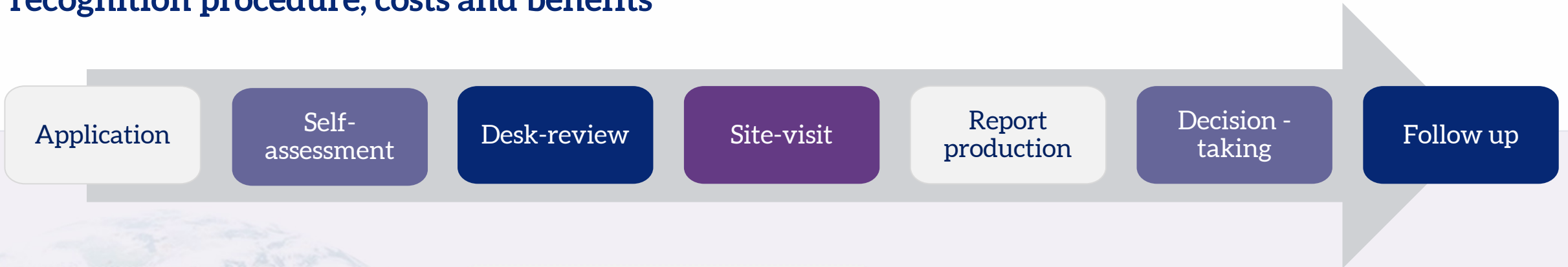
- Synthesis of the criteria of both the external evaluators.
- Single review procedure two separate decisions and awards of recognition.
- Award of two labels (INQAAHE and the other evaluator).
- Inclusion in the register of ISG Aligned EQABs.

## Pathway 3: RECOGNITION of prior review

Through the provision of evidence of prior recognition by an independent, credible and reputable external organization

- Presentation of the criteria and procedures applied.
- External review report and the decision made by the agency.
- Mapping against the INQAAHE ISGs, hence alignment.
- Award of the INQAAHE label.
- Inclusion in the register of ISG Aligned EQABs.

## External quality assurance of EQABs: recognition procedure, costs and benefits



**Expert panel:**  
international peers.

**Consequence:**  
Recognition and  
inclusion in the register.

### Benefits:

- Trust & credibility
- Recognition of accreditation outcomes
- Inclusion in the INQAAHE list of recognized QA bodies
- Enhanced international visibility
- Safeguarding systems
- Complementary membership benefits

**Cost: USD 15000**

excluding travel, subsistence, visa and  
insurance cost of 3 experts.

**Frequency:** every 5 years.

**Cost for recognition of prior reviews: \$3000.**

# Thank You

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