

WEBINAR SERIES

Towards the Bologna Process Ministerial Meeting

WEBINAR #5

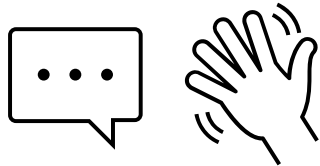
**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE EUROPEAN
QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK**

MARIA KELO

TIA LOUKKOLA

10 NOVEMBER 2020

3 ways of interacting



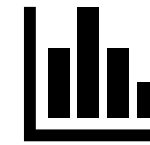
CHAT

Greetings
Technical issues
Other remarks



Q&A

Questions to speakers



Polls

Results under “Closed”
tab

European Quality Assurance Forum

- EQAF has been organised by the E4 organisations since 2006
- Fosters dialogue and exchange of practice between QA actors
- This year online for the first time ever: 12-13 Nov
- Biggest QA event in Europe bringing together wide-range of QA stakeholders



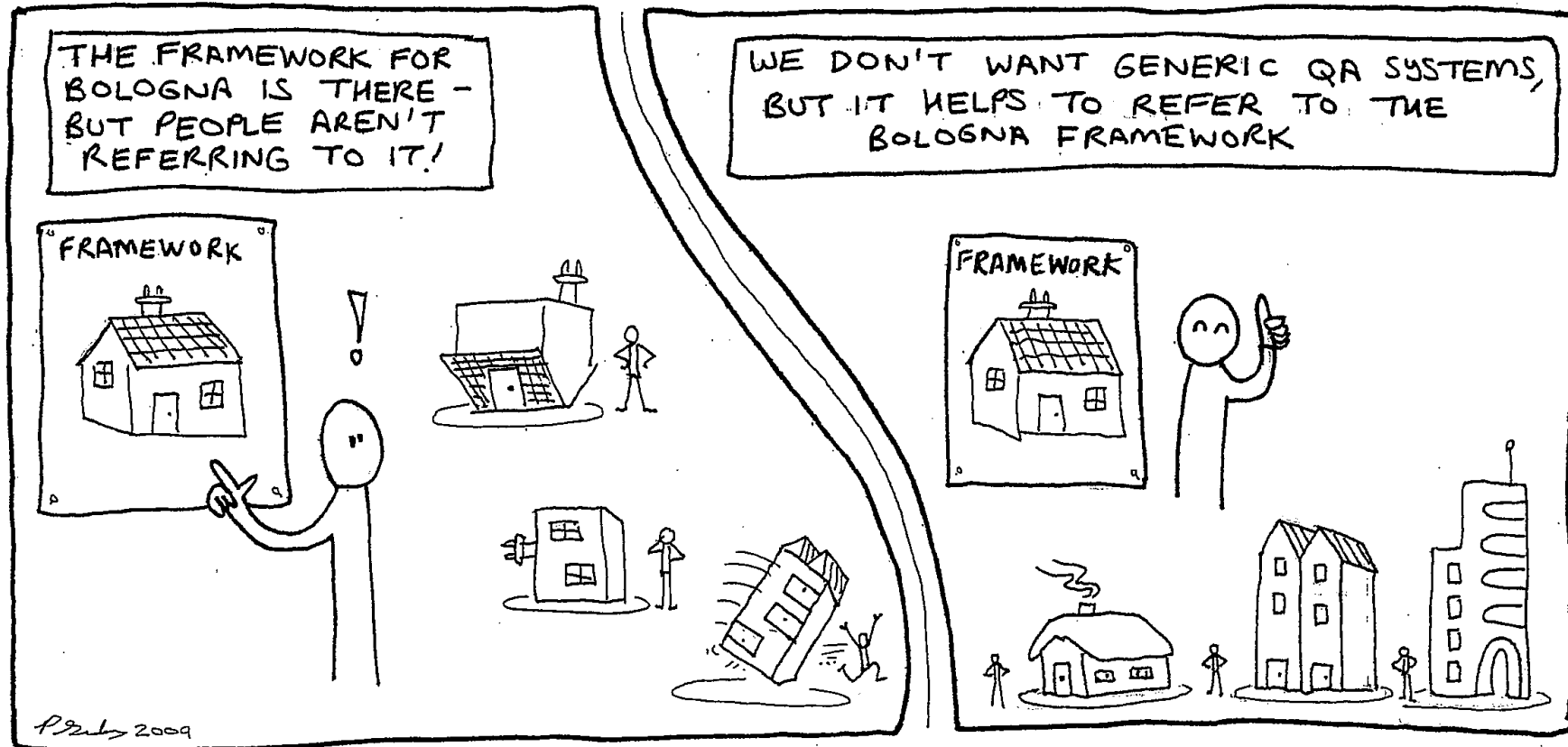
European Association for
Quality Assurance in Higher Education



Key milestones in the European quality assurance

- QA: an action line in the Bologna Process
- 2005: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA (ESG)
 - Proposed by the E4 Group (ENQA, ESU, EUA, EURASHE)
- 2006: European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF)
- 2008: European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)
- 2015: ESG 2015 adopted
 - Proposed by the E4 Group, EQAR, Education International and BUSINESSEUROPE

ESG and status of QA



ESG in very short

- Reference framework for agreed practice in QA in Europe
- Three parts covering
 - Internal QA within HEIs
 - External QA carried by QAAs
 - Internal QA within QAAs
- Focus on quality assurance of higher education
- Principles for QA in the EHEA
 - HEIs have primary responsibility for the quality of their provision and its assurance
 - QA responds to the diversity of higher education systems, institutions, programmes and students
 - QA supports the development of a quality culture
 - QA takes into account the needs and expectations of students, all other stakeholders and society

The ESG - still relevant 15 years on?

- Respect for diversity and flexibility built into the ESG themselves
 - Can be successfully used for QA of different types of provision: elearning, micro-credentials, university alliances...
 - Can accommodate systems that allow for experimentation and innovation in T&L as well as in QA itself
- Require contextualisation and appropriate implementation in different contexts
 - Stakeholder discussion on how to use the ESG flexibly and meaningful in each context
- Use and interpretation (and possible misunderstandings)
 - Can go beyond the standards
 - Can go beyond the ESG (system may be composed of different QA and development tools)
 - Guidelines ≠ standards: to be taken as guidance, advice, suggestions and NOT as rules

See [here](#) for the E4 statement “ESG in the changing landscape of higher education”

QA of elearning and of micro-credentials – additional resources

- ENQA working group report: “[Considerations for quality assurance of elearning](#)” – a guide on how to use the ESG Part 1 for elearning
- Microbol project desk research: [Micro-credentials linked to the Bologna Key Commitments](#) – reminds that the ESG apply to all higher education

What is EQAR?

- Founded 2008 by E4 organisations at Ministers' request
- Mission: enhancing trust and confidence in EHEA
- Main role: to manage a register of QA agencies that comply substantially with the ESG
 - Currently 49 registered agencies from 27 countries
- Complementary activities to maintaining the Register:
 - Monitoring status of legal frameworks for external QA in Europe
 - Monitoring cross-border QA developments
 - Database of external QA results by the registered agencies

Who is who? EQAR or ENQA?

ENQA	EQAR
Members: EHEA QA agencies	Members: National governments and European stakeholder organisations
Founded by the QA agencies (2000)	Founded by the E4, within the Bologna Process (2008)
Acts in the interests of its members	Acts in the "public interest"
Main activities: Representation and support to members, policy making, projects, development of QA, etc.	Main activity: manage a public official register of ESG compliant agencies Also: provide reliable public information
Grew alongside the BP; a consultative members of the BP	Born out of the BP (the first legal entity)
ESG as criteria	ESG as criteria

Diversity of external context and approaches

- Different cultural contexts, history, and traditions
- Different levels of autonomy and capacity of HEIs for IQA
- Different levels of independence and capacity of QAAs for EQA

Different types of agencies and methods

- Evaluation, audit, accreditation...
- Programme level and / or institutional level
- Subject specific / multidisciplinary
- European, national, and regional agencies

Outcomes of quality assessments vary

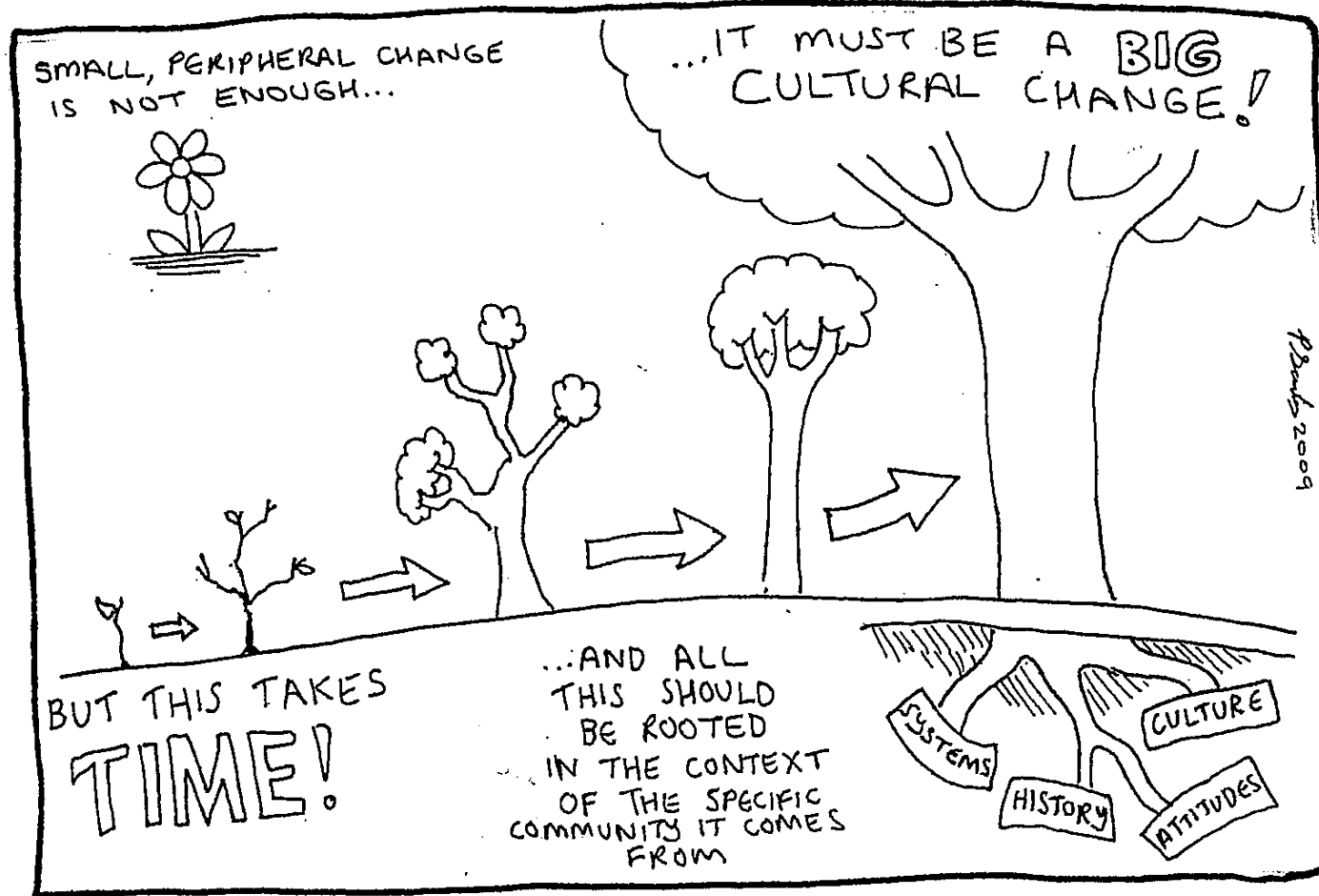
- Permission to operate/award degrees
- Impact on funding
- Recommendations for improvement

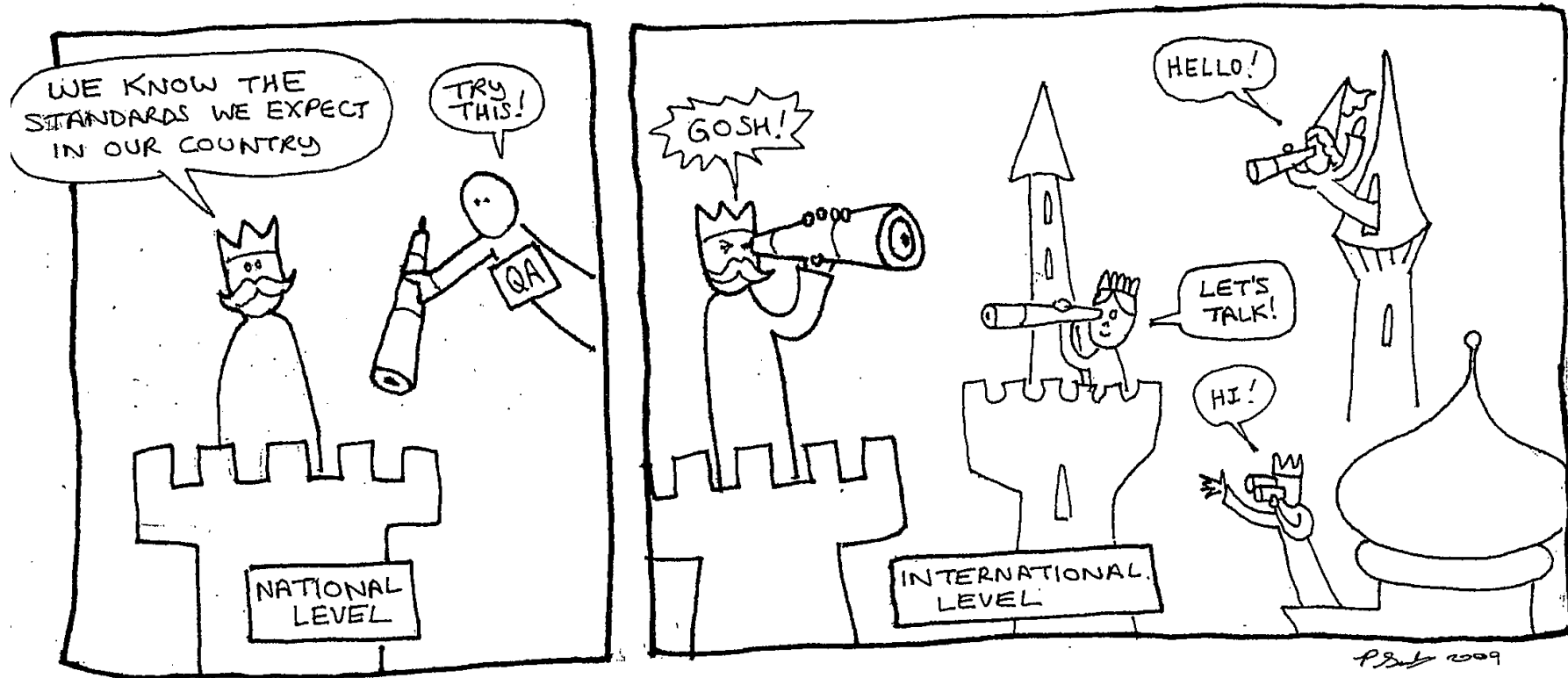


Yellow snow is also snow.

Internal quality assurance

- Institutional responsibility for quality (assurance)
- Increased emphasis on internal QA: ESG Part1 & shift towards institutional external QA in some systems
- Two approaches to internal QA
 - aligned with strategic management: QA as a means to support the achievement of institutional goals
 - explicitly linked to defining and assessing the learning outcomes and ensuring these are aligned to the national qualification framework
- Novelty in the ESG 2015: student-centred learning
- Quality culture the aim, yet remains challenging





WE NEED TO STIMULATE CROSS-BORDER Q.A.

Cross-border QA

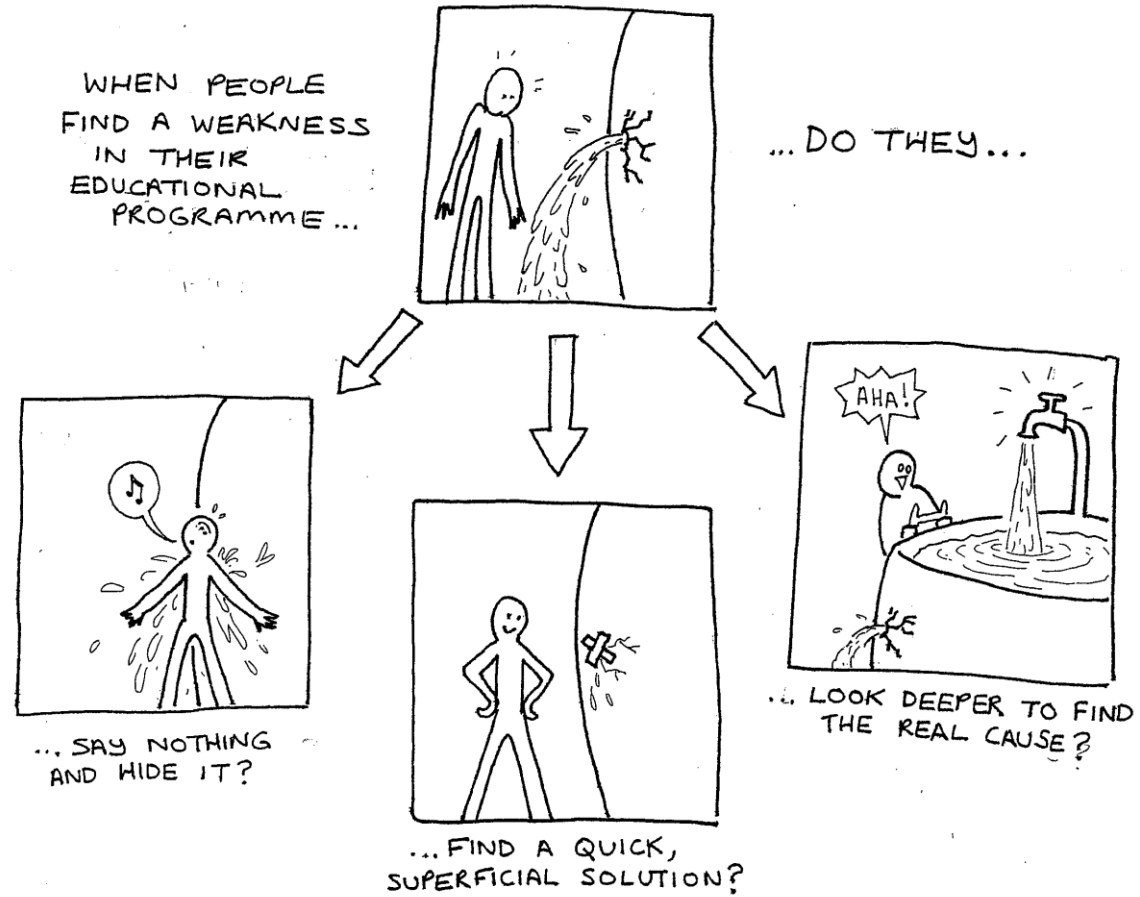
- Cross-border QA = QA agencies operating across borders
- Will to promote this mentioned in the Ministerial Communiqués
- HEIs could choose an agency that suits their profile among EQAR-listed agencies
- According to EQAR web-site today
 - In 19 systems all HEIs can choose a suitable EQAR listed QA agency
 - In 11 systems can choose EQAR-listed agency, which needs to follow national requirements
 - 17 systems do not recognise foreign agencies as part of their national external quality assurance systems at all
- If interested, check Key considerations for Cross-border Quality Assurance developed by the E4 Group and EQAR

QA of joint programme

- Developing joint programme a policy goal at European level – highlighted importance due to European University Initiative
- Challenges identified include external QA, in particular in programme accreditation countries
- European Approach for QA of Joint Programmes adopted in 2015
 - External QA based purely on criteria derived from the ESG Part 1
 - One exercise carried out by EQAR listed agency - all countries involved recognise the results of this exercise
- Relatively limited impact so far
 - In 18 systems use of European approach is not permitted
 - In 15 systems European Approach available to some HEIs or only under specific conditions
 - In 15 systems all HEIs can use the European Approach

Conclusion

- What makes European QA different?
 - Emphasis on student (and stakeholders at large) participation
 - Regional collaboration (although increasing also in other parts of the world)
 - Recognition of the role of internal QA
 - Transparency of external QA reports
- Is QA a success story?
 - For you tell us...



Some useful links

- [ESG 2015](#)
- [European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes](#)
- [Key considerations for cross-border QA](#)
- www.enqa.eu (external QA)
- www.eqar.eu (external QA, Register, DEQAR)
- www.eua.eu (internal QA, quality culture etc)
- www.eurashe.eu (internal QA with focus on professional HE)
- www.esu-online.org (student participation in QA)

- 12-13 Nov** 2020 European Quality Assurance Forum
- 17 Nov** Towards the Bologna Process Ministerial Meeting webinar series: Twenty years of social dimension in the Bologna Process
- 1 Dec** Towards the Bologna Process Ministerial Meeting webinar series: University leaders discuss the Rome Communiqué of the Bologna Process - EUA members only

Information and registration: <https://bit.ly/3icdULo>