Higher Education Accreditation Agency of Republika Srpska

**Thematic analysis of the first cycle of accreditation
of higher education institution in Republika Srpska**

Banja Luka, July 2017

Contents:

1. Introduction

The role of higher education in a social system is fundamental to its development and advancement. Higher education is crucial for the construction and functioning of not only the education system, but of society in general, as training of personnel who take a leadership role in all segments of society takes place precisely at this level of education. In this respect, the development of the higher education system should be viewed in the context of the future development of the entire social system, which certainly entails an extremely high responsibility.

Quality assurance activities in the field of higher education, as one of the pillars of the Bologna Process, have been conducted since the very beginning of the reform activities, and their intensive operationalization has been implemented since 2005 when the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" appear. , adopted by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

The Law on Higher Education of the Republika Srpska (Official Gazette of the Republika Srpska 85/06 and 30/07, 73/10) regulates the principles and goals of higher education in Republika Srpska, the levels of higher education, the establishment of organizations and the work of higher education institutions, quality assurance in the field of higher education, educational activities, as well as other issues relevant to the pursuit of higher education activities.

Unlike the licensing of higher education institutions conducted by the Republika Srpska Ministry of Education and Culture, with the aim of proving compliance with the legal preconditions for the institution's start-up, accreditation is the process of determining the achieved level of quality in accordance with European standards in this field.

The process of quality assurance in the field of higher education in Republika Srpska began in 2012, when the first application for the accreditation process was submitted. The accreditation process includes higher education institutions, the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Srpska, the Higher Education Accreditation Agency of the Republika Srpska, the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance of BiH and commissions of local and international experts, who perform quality audits, provide evaluations and recommendations on accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs.

There are 21 institutions enrolled in the Register of Higher Education Institutions in Republika Srpska - nine universities and 12 colleges, of which two universities and two colleges are public, while the rest are privately owned institutions. Of these, a total of 14 institutions were accredited, while four institutions submitted applications for the institution's accreditation process and study program accreditation.
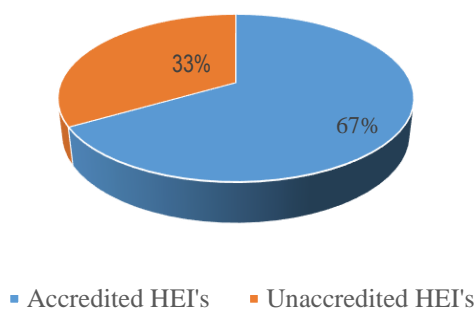
Graph 1. Higher education institutions in Republika Srpska and accreditation

The topic of this analysis is the accreditation process (external evaluation) of higher education institutions in Republika Srpska. The analysis included 14 accredited higher education institutions. An integral part of the analysis are:

1. Self-evaluation of higher education institutions (analysis by criteria)
2. Disadvantages, limitations of analysis
3. Recommendations for improvement

In order to make the analysis more complete, a satisfaction survey of HEIs was conducted, which is attached to this document.

The aim of this analysis is to give a structural view and analysis of the data on higher education institutions, which were obtained during the accreditation process. Systematic collection of data on higher education institutions and their programs, analysis of accreditation results and their publication are essential for the higher education system, for the development of appropriate policies and instruments to identify and overcome the potential dangers and problems encountered by higher education institutions. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct continuous research, analysis, and stakeholder surveys.

2. On the accreditation process

The main task of the Higher Education Accreditation Agency of Republika Srpska is to organize and implement the process of external quality evaluation and accreditation of higher education institutions and the study programs they carry out, which includes verification related to the management of the higher education institution, the processes that implement the study programs, the internal quality system in the higher education institution, capacities, resources and potentials of higher education institution and capacities for change.

The Higher Education Accreditation Agency bases the accreditation process on European standards and guidelines in the field of higher education (ESG) and Criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in BiH.

These standards identify three levels of activity in a single quality assurance system:

- internal quality assurance within higher education institutions through the application of suitable methods and their integration into a single Quality Management and Continuous Quality Improvement System,

- external quality assurance through external (external) oversight of the effectiveness and efficiency of internal quality assurance systems of higher education institutions, methods of independent evaluation (external evaluation) by a committee of domestic and foreign experts, and accreditation by competent authorities (agencies),

- external quality assurance of competent authorities for quality assurance and accreditation processes (agencies) and their recognition in the European Networks of Agencies (ENQA) and the European Agency Registry (EQAR).

At the level of European documents, the Agency is also guided by the Bologna Declaration, while the accreditation process is legally regulated by the Law on Higher Education of Republika Srpska and the Framework Law on Higher Education in BiH.

3. Analysis of documents involved in the accreditation process

The Agency has adopted the following documentation, which details the procedures and actions within the accreditation process:
- Procedure for accreditation of higher education institutions,
- Instructions for access to accreditation,
- Application form for the application,
- Instructions for conducting the external evaluation procedure with the following forms:
  - Individual checklist,
  - Visiting plan and program,
  - Assessment of the situation and recommendations for improvement,
  - Report.

Table: Overview of the accreditation process by phase, title of documents and competences

Stages		Documentation	Competent authority
I	*Previous activities* - preparation of a self-evaluation report - filling in the application form with attachments	- Accreditation Access Guide - Application form for application - Self-evaluation report	Higher education institution
II	*Application* - receiving and reviewing the application - appointment of a commission of experts	- Application form for application - List of experts	Higher education institution, Higher Education Accreditation Agency of Republika Srpska, HEA
III	*External evaluation* - Visit of a Commission of	- Self-evaluation report - ESG standards and BiH	Commission of Experts

	experts to a higher education institution - Preparation of the Report on external evaluation of the higher education institution	criteria - Checklist - Documentation of higher education institution - Report on external evaluation of higher education institution	
IV	*Accreditation decision* - issuing a recommendation on accreditation - issuing accreditation decisions - registration of the decision in the register	- Accreditation recommendations - Accreditation decisions	Higher Education Accreditation Agency of Republika Srpska, HEA
V	*Follow-up of follow-up activities of higher education institutions (Follow up)* - development of a form for monitoring the follow-up activities of higher education institutions	- Form for monitoring the follow-up activities of higher education institutions	Higher education institution, Higher Education Accreditation Agency of Republika Srpska

The accreditation procedure defines the course of the entire process of quality assurance at a higher education institution, from internal quality assurance, submission of applications for accreditation, appointment of a panel of experts, external evaluation, to issuance of accreditation decisions.

The Accreditation Access Guide is intended for a higher education institution that intends to initiate an accreditation process in order to become familiar with the conditions it must meet in order to access accreditation.

The application form is provided in both electronic and written versions where the electronic version is linked via links to all supporting documents provided by the institution as evidence of meeting the requirements of the standards and criteria. This makes it easier for institutions to prepare documentation, which, in addition to the application form, which is signed and verified, is fully electronic. At the same time, the commission of experts receives a unique document based on standards and criteria, which facilitates the analysis of documentation, which is usually very extensive.

An external evaluation guideline is defined to maximize the standardization of the quality assurance process by experts in commissions in such a way that it is determined exactly which conditions are required for what level of satisfaction of the standard requirements.

The rating scale is based on the PDCA circuit and the EFQM model. All the documents adopted by the Agency were adopted with the participation of all interested parties in their preparation, primarily the academic community in Republika Srpska.
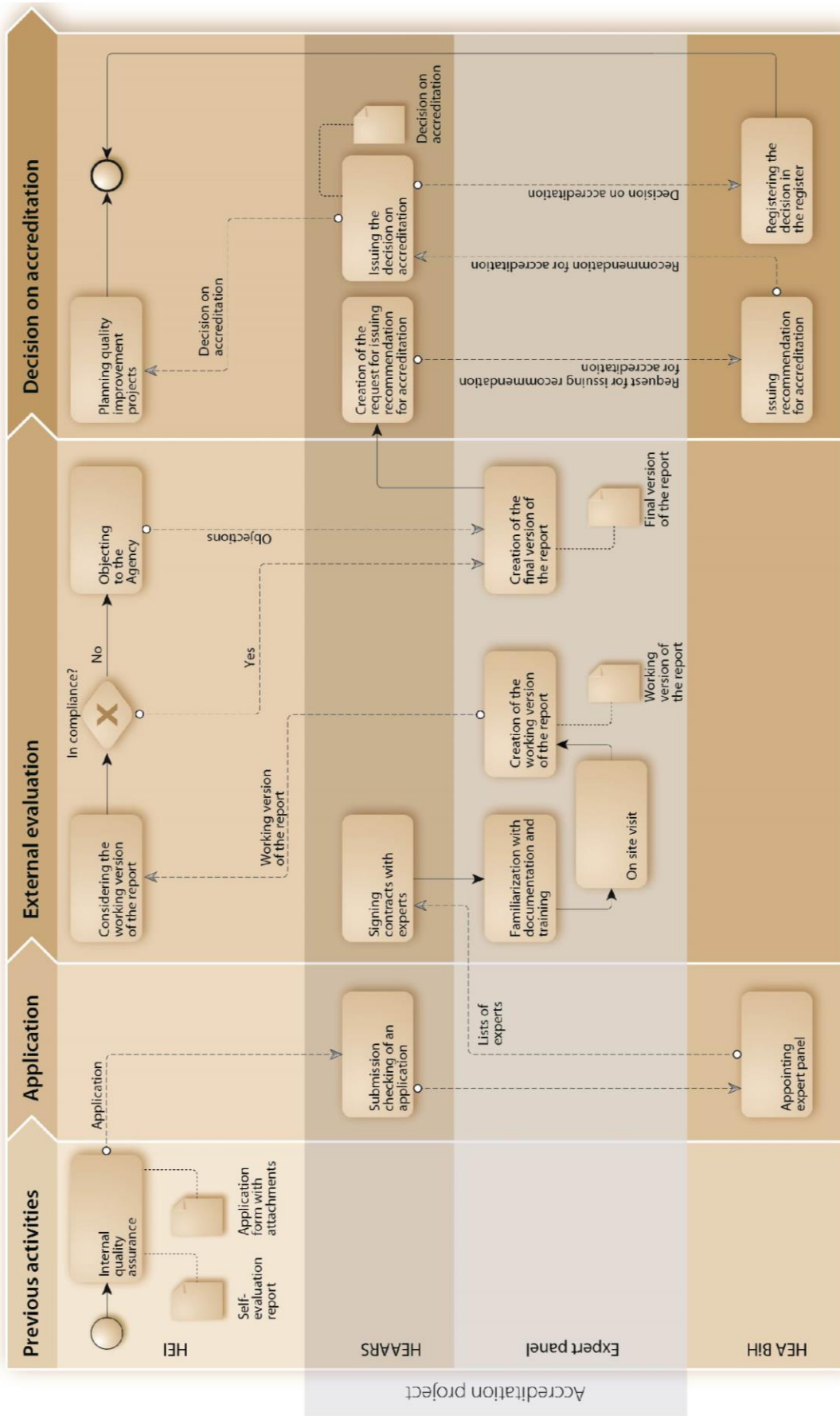
Image: The accreditation process of higher education institutions in Republika Srpska

3.1 Self-evaluation of HEI (analysis by criteria)

The higher education institution carries out a process of self-evaluation in order to determine the level of quality and effectiveness of the established quality system in consultation with the Accreditation Forum, the Council for the Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance of Republika Srpska, as well as experts in the field of quality assurance.

The self-evaluation report serves as a basis for quality evaluation and implementation of quality improvement projects that will be reflected in further activities. Self-evaluation should encompass the work of the institution as a whole, as well as any part of it. The self-evaluation process should involve all key groups in the higher education institution, in particular: students, academic and non-academic staff, and stakeholders, such as representatives of the local community, the labor market, graduates, etc.

Below is an analysis of individual criteria, of which there are nine, which are used in the self-evaluation of a higher education institution.

Quality assessment by individual criteria

A.1 *Higher education institution development and strategy*
   (requirements of ESG standard 1.1 and BiH criteria a1, a2, a3)

"Quality and strategy, two sides of the same coin."

The introduction of quality procedures, that is, the assurance and development of a quality system, only makes sense when the mission, vision and goals are clearly defined by the professional team of the higher education institution. A quality approach enables the collection of reliable information to make decisions related to activities that will assist in the development and improvement of the higher education institution, as well as to verify that the activities carried out have set the goals in the right direction.

During the external evaluation procedures of higher education institutions, a misunderstanding of the structure and purpose of internal quality assurance systems was noted. Also, some universities did not recognize the definition and implementation of improvement projects as one of the most important elements of the purpose of the internal quality assurance system.

Higher education institutions should view quality as a management instrument and entrust quality procedures to the persons (coordinator or coordinating sector) who are responsible for coordinating, implementing, evaluating and improving the system.

Analyzing the criteria for the development and strategy of higher education, it was noticed that some higher education institutions do not have expert teams in charge of strategy development, and insufficient knowledge and interest of employees and stakeholders with the importance and goals of the strategy. The job is entrusted to staff not in charge of that part of the job, and thus increases the possibility of making mistakes when defining strategic goals and its indicators, which further reflects on the quality of the activities carried out by HEI. In order to overcome this problem, it is necessary to involve the management, appoint expert teams, meet and engage the stakeholders in the strategy development process.

Another problem facing higher education institutions is related to the development of a strategy for international cooperation and scientific research.

The average grade according to the criteria Development and strategy of higher education institutions is 2.86.

A.2 *Management, internal quality assurance and quality culture*
  (requirements of ESG standards 1.1, 2.1, 2.6. and BiH criteria b1, b2, b3, b4 and b5)

Analyzing the criteria for management, internal quality assurance and quality culture, it was noted that all higher education institutions have documents that regulate work procedures and quality assurance procedures. However, these documents are not precisely defined. Some higher education institutions have not defined initial indicators, there are no detailed action plans and procedures for further work and for eliminating the identified deficiencies. It is necessary to define precisely the set of documents, forms, determine the methods, adopt them and determine the competences for their implementation.

Each higher education institution has quality assurance bodies such as quality assurance commissions/teams, quality coordinators, and an ethics committee. Some higher education institutions do not have a clearly defined way in which formally, legally and practically, the members of the Quality Assurance Commissions perform their function. In addition, another problem faced by HEIs is that they have employees who perform multiple functions in their organizational and management structure, thereby reducing the efficiency and effectiveness of their work, which reflects on the quality of functioning of the HEI. The functioning of the higher education institution should be influenced by the quality system managers who would coordinate, implement, evaluate and improve the system. Some higher education institutions do not have any quality assurance managers involved in the functioning of the institution.

Higher education institutions have also included students in the development of the quality system, acting through the Student Parliament/Senate, Scientific-teaching council. The choice of students in the bodies of higher education institutions in individual institutions is not clearly defined. Students in the quality authorities have not received any training in the field of quality. It is necessary to disseminate a culture of quality for students through the maintenance of trainings and their involvement in the work of quality commissions.

Internal evaluations of higher education institutions and student surveys should be conducted on an annual basis, which is not practical for some institutions. Also, in some institutions of higher education, the survey system does not work in the best way, the question is how it is conducted and what is happening with the results of the survey. The implementation of the survey results is questionable. There is a need to improve the analysis and use of results analysis to improve quality and compare it with other similar institutions.

The average grade according to the criteria Management, Internal Quality Assurance and Quality Culture is 3.14.

A.3 Procedures and quality assurance of study programs
 (requirements of ESG standard 1.2 and BiH criteria b1, b2, b3)

All higher education institutions have in place a procedure for the design, development, monitoring, modification and termination of study programs. However, it is not fully explained how to modify / revise the study programs or supplement the elemental content of the syllabus, such as the literature used and the names of the lecturers, especially in relation to professional and scientific research work. The manner of realization of the case is not fully documented. The way ECTS credits are determined is unclear. There is no documented verification of the adequacy of the ECTS credits awarded. Most students do not understand what ECTS credits represent, while most teaching staff are unsure how to determine them. Despite the fact that higher education institutions take into account stakeholders when creating study programs, students did not confirm their active participation in the revision of study programs.

Some higher education institutions have established cooperation with the labor market, whose information and recommendations are included in the design of study programs. However, there is a problem of insufficient linkage of study programs with the labor market, due to the lack of defined learning outcomes with competencies in most study programs. It is necessary to base the learning outcomes on competencies and organize workshops on defining competences and learning outcomes. Clearly define the exit competencies of graduate students who exit the study programs. Develop methods for measuring graduates' competencies and compare them with those predicted. Collect, analyze and make proposals for improvement of study programs based on the recommendation of the labor market.

Despite the awareness of the management structures about the importance of the role of the economy, practice and alumni, as well as receiving feedback on the quality of study programs and higher education institutions as a whole, not enough frequent and meaningful contacts have been established, as well as legal-formalized cooperation with them. Involve alumni, industry and practice and other stakeholders in competency development, in the form of roundtables, workshops and conducting surveys).

Higher education institutions periodically carry out analyzes of the implementation of study programs, monitor the admission rate, the number of students enrolled, conduct student analyzes, innovate study programs. Some higher education institutions have underdeveloped and applied procedures for the development and revision of study programs, and some do not have procedures for revision. Institutionally resolve the issue of practical teaching and output profiles of individual study programs. Audit the program every four years based on the quality of the generation of students exiting the program and input from industry and practice. Higher education institutions should continually monitor the data of the Employment Fund about the employability of graduates and inform students about it. Such data would be useful in determining the enrollment quotas for individual colleges.

The average grade according to the criteria of Procedure and quality assurance of study programs is 3.07.

A.4 *Student Assessment*
(requirements of ESG standard 1.3 and BiH criteria g1 and g2)

All higher education institutions have in place a procedure for grading students, ie. assessment rules and criteria, which are available on web sites of most higher education institutions and are accessible to all interested parties. In some higher education institutions, the quality system is periodically monitored, analyzed and proposals are made to improve students' grades, and the files of graduates are updated, while in others it has not been applied in practice. Some higher education institutions continually retrieve statistics and analyze student achievement (pass-through analysis) at the level of the study program and higher education institution. Nevertheless, in some higher education institutions there is no evidence of the measures taken after the analysis of the data collected, or the analysis of changes in case there are extreme variations in the percentage of passing in certain subjects. Improve the way data is collected through the development of the information system and introduce more detailed records of students' passing rates by year and subject.

The activities undertaken with the aim of improving the transience are not sufficiently specified. After each examination period, perform an analysis of the transience, in order to identify certain tendencies and accordingly to make final analyzes, and on the basis of them to plan the activities of improvement.

Only a few institutions have defined/partially defined appeal procedures that are analyzed and monitored through the quality assurance system, and students are still hesitant to take advantage of the appeal process and are not adequately informed about the details of the appeal process. Define the rules of appeal procedures more precisely and improve the flow of information to students when it comes to their rights.

Students are informed about the assessment methodology. Although passing all exams at higher education institutions is transparent and public, it is unclear how it is verified that student proficiency checks are conducted according to defined rules. There is no balance between pre-exam and exam obligations. Integrate curricula, ie. for each study program and subject, describe in detail the objectives of the course, more precisely the content of the course, and indicate the learning outcomes and competences and harmonize student examination processes. It should reward the best students and encourage extracurricular activities (awards for scientific papers, sports, competitions with students from other universities, etc.).

The average grade according to the criterion The student grade is 3.29.

A.5 *Human resources*
(BiH criteria d2, d3, d4 and d6 requirements)

Most higher education institutions have legal acts (rulebooks) for selection into scientific-teaching titles and procedures, strategies for continuous training of staff, but insufficiently defined. Higher education institutions take care of their employees and support them in the form of funds, funds for their training. The criteria for awarding funding for scientific and vocational training have not been defined. The system for the development, monitoring and evaluation of teaching and administrative staff has not been established. There is a willingness to retain the best students at higher education institutions. Employees are familiar with the legal regulations governing their statutes, employment and work.

All higher education institutions have declared that they do not have a satisfactory number of employees and qualified teachers and associates, and that at some higher education institutions they are not satisfied, motivated and dedicated to the work they should be. This is because a large number of teachers/professors have an election in several scientific fields and teach more subjects. No analysis of teaching staff load was presented. This calls into question the quality of teaching. Insufficient mobility of teaching staff. Work on increasing the number of full-time employees, ie. teachers and associates. Improve the mobility of teaching staff. Encourage the development of young people and their own staff.

Some higher education institutions have documents regulating the process of publishing books and textbooks. Some higher education institutions publish journals and newsletters, while most institutions do not have a record of work published by teaching staff or an accompanying database. Relatively small number of published scientific and professional papers annually. Work to increase the number of published scientific and professional papers. There are no plans and procedures in place for the evaluation and training of non-teaching staff. Insufficient scientific research work and transfer of new technologies and knowledge to the teaching process in certain fields. Strive to improve scientific research work and invest more effort and resources in the development of scientific research work, as well as the improvement of teachers and associates.

One of the higher education institutions has developed a web-based scientific research portal with published data on the scientific-research activity of employees.

The average rating according to the Human Resources criterion is 2.36.

A.6 Quality of physical resources
  (BiH criteria requirements e1, e2, e3 and e4)

High-quality physical resources are available from three of the 14 higher education institutions, equipped classrooms, computer rooms/cabinets with software packages, amphitheaters, laboratories, libraries with a satisfactory number of library units and reading rooms, while other higher education institutions have satisfactory physical resources adapted to the realization of teaching. The two higher education institutions have collaborations with Microsoft and use their software base, and through the Tempus project, funding has been provided to equip additional study and work spaces for individual study programs. When it comes to persons with disabilities, only one higher education institution (Slobomir P University) out of 14 has customized entrances for students with disabilities, although there are still physical barriers in some parts of the institution. All higher education institutions should, to the extent practicable, facilitate access for persons with disabilities within the institutions.

The equipment of libraries and reading rooms is one of the problems that every higher education institution faces. In the libraries of some institutions of higher education there is no information on the exact number of titles and no analysis of titles by category and age is made. The cataloging of literature in some is not regulated. Insufficient headlines in English and other languages. Some institutions of higher education do not have the space provided for reading rooms, while some of the institutions have reading rooms with fewer seats than the number of students.

All higher education institutions have a problem with subscriptions to international scientific journals in the relevant scientific fields, some with insufficient subscriptions to journals, foreign and domestic, while some even lack subscriptions to journals. In some higher education institutions the database

system is underdeveloped. There is no strategy for acquiring library units and recent literature. Provide funding for journals and literature in foreign languages and seek to increase their numbers. Extend e-book procurement practices to areas where there are insufficient library units.

It is necessary to continuously improve physical resources, in terms of forecasting the funds for procurement of equipment for scientific research, literature, online databases. Provide internet in all parts of higher education institutions. To think about establishing a campus in higher education institutions that has not yet been formed, and to improve the resources available to students.

The average grade according to the criterion quality of physical resources is 3.93.

A.7 Information systems
   (requirements of ESG standard 1.3 and BiH criteria e1, e2, e3 and e4)

Quality information systems for collecting and analyzing data for an institution are provided by three higher education institutions, other higher education institutions should improve the information systems. Adopt procedures and regulations governing the flow of necessary data. Adapt and upgrade existing information systems, enrich them with software (from request analysis to testing), to meet the needs of departments, students, staff, etc. Upon obtaining the appropriate software, promptly enter the data required for the various types of analysis to make the data available at all times. Information relevant to the teaching process is collected, analyzed and used in an appropriate and meaningful way. Most higher education institutions do not have an integrated information system to collect, analyze, use and document information relevant to the teaching process. Absence of unique personnel bases. Some colleges have separate information systems. All faculties should be linked to a single information system. Some of the higher education institutions do not make comparisons with certain quality parameters with other institutions in the country and in the region. Registration of exams at certain higher education institutions is not conducted electronically, ie. it is implemented in a classic way, which significantly slows down the process and analysis of data. External associates are responsible for maintaining information systems in some higher education institutions.

All higher education institutions have a web site containing most of the relevant information: bulletin board, study programs, study cycles, contact information, news, etc. Some higher education institutions do not have an English language website (web site), while other sites have not been updated for a longer period of time. Only two higher education institutions out of 14 have IT support for distance learning. Partnership with Microsoft IT Academy Platinum Pro, in the field of education and implementation of Microsoft technologies, has only one higher education institution. In addition, it provides IP Television services, IP radio, broadcasting of academic and educationally documented television programs via Internet TV channels. One of the institutions uses Moodle and Microsoft Spark Dream solution. One institution has e-student, e-professor and Singipedia applications.

The average rating according to the criterion information systems is 3.43.

A.8 Presentation of information to the public
    (requirements of ESG standard 1.7 and BiH criteria f1, f2 and f3)

All higher education institutions have websites that provide transparency of information for all stakeholders. Nevertheless, there are difficulties with the lack of information availability outside the region, some of the information on the website is not available in English, while some higher education institutions offer content in Serbian only. Strive to expand the availability of information to a wider environment, ie. intensify the exchange and publication of information both within and outside the region. Provide a bilingual website. Websites are updated regularly and there are people in charge of marketing the establishment. Some higher education institutions do not have the person responsible for administering and updating the website. The content offered by higher education institutions on the web pages are curricula of all cycles and all types of studies, competition for enrollment, competition for admission to employment and teacher selection. Some higher education institutions did not provide information on syllabuses, teachers, literature, etc. on the site. Information on syllabuses, teachers, literature should be available on the website of the higher education institution.

Most higher education institutions have electronic and printed guides for freshmen, promotional materials, leaflets, flyers, posters. Strive to translate the relative printed information on the work of higher education institutions into English. Higher education institutions have good cooperation with the media and stakeholders. In some higher education institutions, systematic data on cooperation with the economy, and with alumni are not published regularly, while in others there are no established alumni for faculties and insufficient cooperation with the economy. Organize alumni association by area and intensify cooperation with industry. Work on developing institutional models of cooperation with industry and practice in accordance with the specifics of scientific fields and needs of study programs.

Representatives of institutions participate in regional fairs of education, scholarships and similar. Some higher education institutions have teams to collect and publish information on the site. Some institutions organize "open doors" for high school graduates and their parents. Some higher education institutions have a public relations policy and a public communication strategy. Develop and adopt a public relations and communication policy and strategy.

The average rating according to the criterion of presentation of information to the public is 3.07.

A.9 International cooperation
    (BiH criteria requirements z1, z2 and z3)

Only one (UNI BL) out of 14 higher education institutions, according to the commission report and grade five, met this criterion. It has strategic directions and goals for the development of international cooperation, as well as defined rules for concluding contracts with other institutions. Other regulations have been developed, necessary for the mobility of students and teaching staff and international cooperation. There are a significant number of international cooperation agreements signed. Each faculty has a person in charge of international cooperation. The higher education institution participates in a large number of international projects. Other higher education institutions have procedures for developing and enhancing international cooperation, but at an underdeveloped level. Higher education institutions have signed cooperation agreements with several universities in the region and abroad. Adopt a rulebook on professional development of employees abroad. Some of the higher education institutions have persons in charge of international cooperation. Some higher education institutions

publish international journals (Apeiron). Institutions are making significant efforts to improve international cooperation. One of the institutions (Kapa FI) carried out benchmarking with similar institutions in the area.

Some of the higher education institutions participate in TEMPUS and ERASMUS + projects, achieving international cooperation with other higher education institutions through exchanges of teachers and students. However, it is a small number of international projects and the mobility of teaching staff. More precise strategies for international cooperation are lacking. Strive to build collegial agreements with similar institutions from abroad by asking for joint projects and programs.

Some higher education institutions have not defined the funds that are allocated and planned for this type of promotion of higher education. For some higher education institutions (College of Service Business), the budget at their disposal is a brake on international cooperation. Plan dedicated resources in the annual budget to strengthen international cooperation.

Teachers, students and administrative staff of some of the higher education institutions are not sufficiently familiar with the possibilities and program of international mobility and cooperation. There were far fewer students than teachers involved in exchanges at individual higher education institutions. To post regularly on the web pages of the institutions information on international cooperation programs, as well as on current scholarships and trends in the field of international cooperation. There are also examples of higher education institutions (Primus, PIM) where there is no international cooperation and mobility of teaching staff and students. The conducted surveys confirmed that neither employees nor students participated in any major international project. Some institutions have problems writing applications for international and other projects. An obstacle in the mobility of students and teaching staff of some higher education institutions (VPTŠ, Primus) is the insufficient/low level of English proficiency. It is necessary to inform students and teachers in greater detail about the importance of international cooperation and their mobility and further progress. Organize workshops for writing international projects and demonstrate the importance of English language skills. Establish study or lectures of specific subjects in English.

The average rating according to the criterion international cooperation is 2.43.

3.2 Improvement recommendations

Regarding the recommendations for the improvement of the activities of higher education institutions in the first cycle of accreditation, in this analysis the common characteristics of the recommendations were identified according to all criteria:

1. Development and strategy of higher education institution

- Development of university strategy
- Developing and developing a strategy for international cooperation and research - develop procedures and adopt a strategy and other regulations for implementing international cooperation
- Introduce periodic evaluations / analyzes on an annual basis
- Make available through the website the strategy, regulations of the faculties and the Republic, as well as important documents such as international treaties and conventions.

- Consult with stakeholders. Expand participation.
- Define or revise existing quality indicators and introduce periodic analyzes
- Establish cooperation with representatives of industry and practice; labor markets
- Involve current and former students in adopting a change and improvement strategy
- Define indicators for each objective

2. *Management, internal quality assurance and quality culture*

- Introduce an electronic document management system
- Improve the work of the Ethics Committee
- Introduce the code of ethics to the public, primarily employees and students
- Academic integration (linking the subject matter to the faculty regardless of the place of teaching)
- Work on developing a quality strategy
- Introduce self-evaluation reports
- Define the criteria for analyzing student passing
- Develop a poll policy
- Introduce surveys for administrative staff and students
- Introduce a zero-tolerance policy on fraud
- Student representation of all cycles in governing bodies
- Develop more indicators to monitor the implementation of curriculum development strategies, research strategy, student mobility, teaching and non-teaching staff
- Involve students in the preparation of self-assessment and quality assessment reports and in conducting surveys as members of the survey committee
- Determine the forms, methods and responsibilities for implementing the decisions of the quality assessment committees
- Consider providing other forms of standardization and quality assurance - e.g. ISO standard
- Using benchmarking as a quality assurance tool

3. *Procedures and quality assurance of study programs*

- Introduce a clear audit procedure and procedure for monitoring each study program - e.g. every four years
- Base learning outcomes on competencies
- Define graduates' exit competencies and determine who (in the curriculum) gives which competencies
- Solve the issue of practical classes and output profiles for individual study programs - Introduce the practical part of teaching
- Periodically (every four years) audit programs based on the quality of the outgoing student generation
- Create a matrix for study programs - the relationship between learning outcomes, competencies and syllabuses of individual subjects
- Introducing English classes

4. _Student assessment_

- Introduce electronic registration of exams and electronic record keeping of teachers' exams (record keeping and electronic filing of documentation)
- The mandatory student attendance continues
- Reconcile the percentage of points for pre-exam and exam obligations
- Improve the methodology for determining ECTS credits and review the system for awarding "ECTS" credits. of the valuation system
- Do student passing analysis and sort by subcategories (eg gender and age structure)
- Keep track of passing rates by year and subject
- Promote the possibility of appeal procedures and encourage students to take exams on commissions
- Improve the flow of information to students when it comes to their rights

5. _Human resources_

- Provide financial resources for further training of teaching staff and improvement of Scientific and Research work
- Developing your own teaching staff
- Make transparent data on teacher training and their membership in scientific and professional associations
- Implement self-evaluation of management, teaching and non-teaching staff in order to raise the level of quality
- Conduct annual analyzes of teaching staff and other staff (age structure, domestic and guest staff ratio, qualifications)
- Introduce an electronic employee register with monitoring of the most important indicators of professional and scientific progress
- Develop a clear staff development plan
- Encourage the work of teaching staff in publishing publications in the area they are hired for and establish procedures for publishing their own textbooks
- Develop a network of reviewers
- Analysis of age structure and stimulation of development of younger and own staff

6. _Quality of physical resources_

- Invest in book acquisition
- Establish a virtual library
- Systematic investments in equipment and infrastructure
- Formation of a central library (resource improvement)
- Provide relevant scientific journals
- Provide better Internet access
- Provide access for persons with disabilities to all parts of the HEI
- Provide access to some of the significant online databases
- Increase the number of library units in foreign languages
- Work on training and improving library staff

7. Information systems

- Develop an integrated HEI information system
- Establish a system of measurable quality indicators
- Regular and better quality website updates
- Enter student survey results electronically
- Using open source platforms to publish teaching and other content

8. Presentation of public information

- Website improvement
- Developing a strategy and policy for public relations and communication
- Organization of alumni associations by area
- Introduce English language websites and publications
- Ensure the position of public relations officer
- Establish cooperation with economy and practice
- Introduce or enhance a student guide

9. International cooperation

- Increase the outgoing and incoming mobility of students and professors - improve the mobility of students and teaching staff
- Financially encourage mobility and research
- Introduce study course or classes in English
- Increase the number of student exchange agreements
- Provide a place for associates for international cooperation and mobility
- Establish a system of rewarding authors for published work abroad indexed in a reputed scientific base
- Organize staff training for writing international and other projects

Considering the fact that the lowest average grade, observed by the criteria, was noticed at the criterion "international cooperation", as well as the fact that in all institutions that received a letter of expectation in the first round of accreditation, this criterion was among the under-rated, it could be concluded that further analysis of the causes of problems and challenges faced by institutions in this area is needed.

4. Stakeholder satisfaction surveys

The Agency attaches great importance to the satisfaction of service users, as well as other stakeholders in the process of accreditation of higher education institutions, and therefore carried out regular surveys of representatives of higher education institutions, as well as all members of expert commissions tasked with evaluating the work of institutions in accordance with the requirements of criteria and standards.

## 4.1 Analysis of Higher Education Evaluation Questionnaires

1. Level of satisfaction with the documents and forms of the Agency used in the accreditation process:
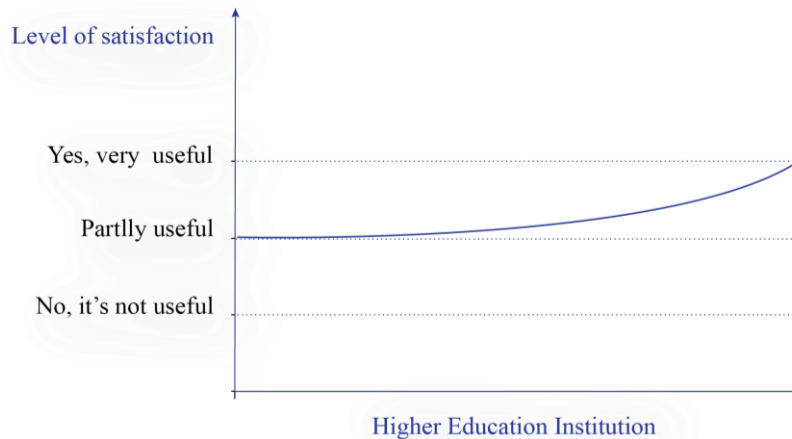
Comments:

- The requested documentation was not verbal as it was requested in electronic form with clear preparation instructions and clear questions in the application form.
- The required documentation was complex

2. Price satisfaction level for accreditation services:
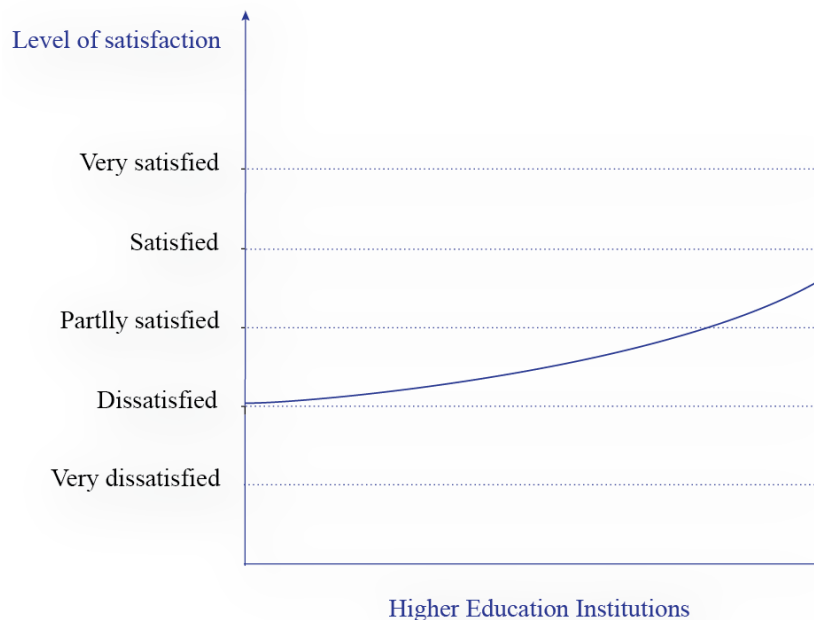
Comments:

- The price was too high given that the listing in the Register kept by the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance of Bosnia and Herzegovina had not yet been realized.
- The cost is too high in relation to the financing of private higher education institutions. This should be taken into account before defining the rates for accreditation of study programs.

3. Level of satisfaction with the organization of the accreditation process by the Agency?
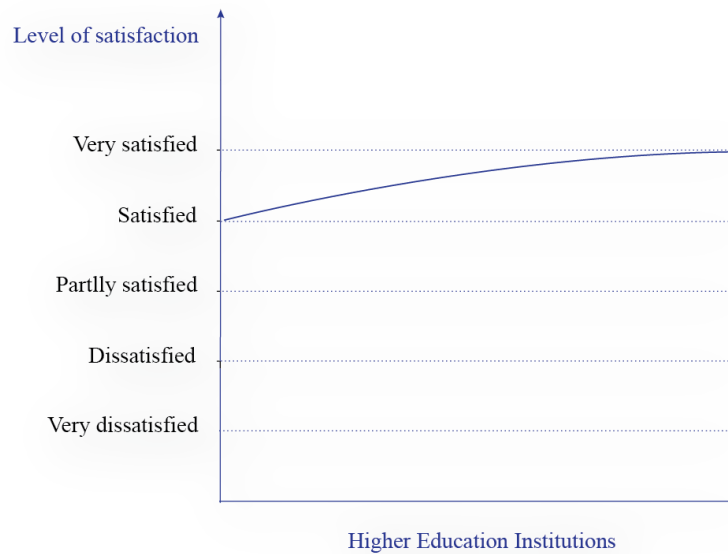
Comments:

*   In terms of organization and support by the RS HEAA, all was well. If possible, we would like a HEI representative (perhaps from the quality assurance office) to be present during the student meeting (or to be informed about the information students provide) because students provided many details and more comprehensive responses to panel members than during a survey conducted by HEI.
*   All data and information requested from the Agency has been prepared in advance, so our cooperation with the Agency is satisfactory.

4. Level of satisfaction with the selection of panel members for accreditation of their HEIs (bearing in mind that experts can only be selected from the list of experts):
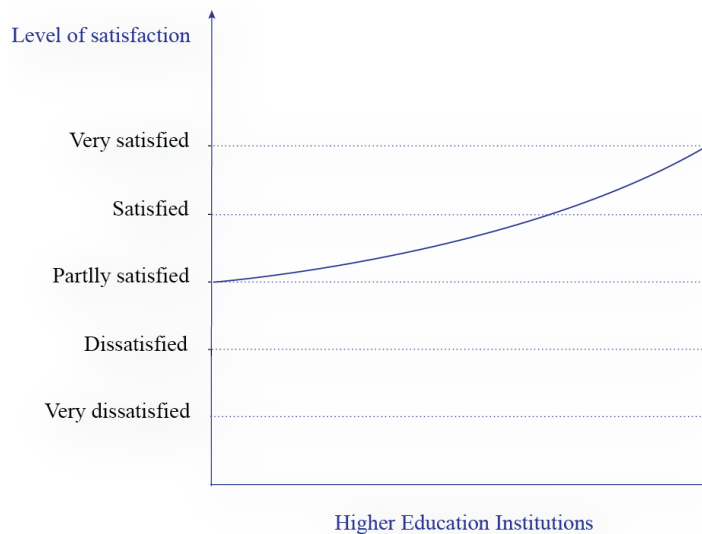
Comments:

*   The chair of the collegium and the student representative were excellent in their competencies,

while the business field representative and international expert did not show an impartial attitude towards private higher education institutions.

- There are very few professors from private higher education institutions in all panels.

5. *Level of satisfaction with the work and approach of the expert commission:*

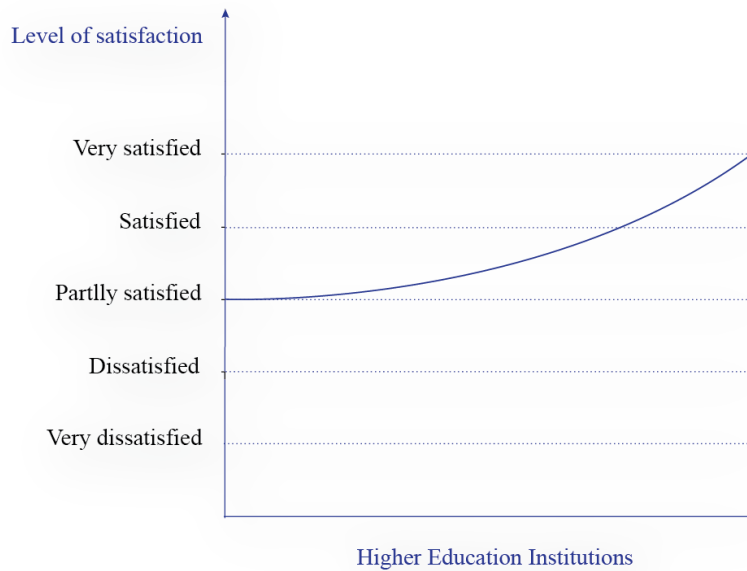
Higher Education Institutions

Comments:

- The chair of the collegium and the student representative were excellent in their competencies, while the business field representative and international expert showed an impartial attitude towards private higher education institutions.
- The Commission performs its mission of accrediting the University professionally.

6. *Level of satisfaction with the recommendations given by the panel of experts for their institution:*
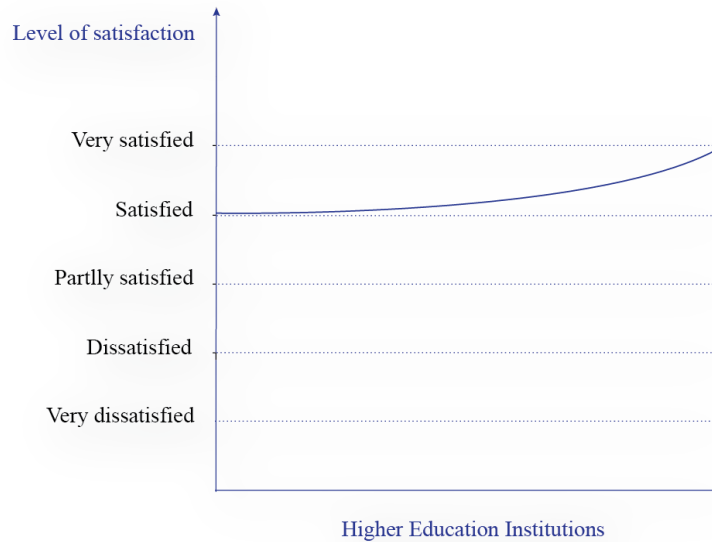

Higher Education Institutions
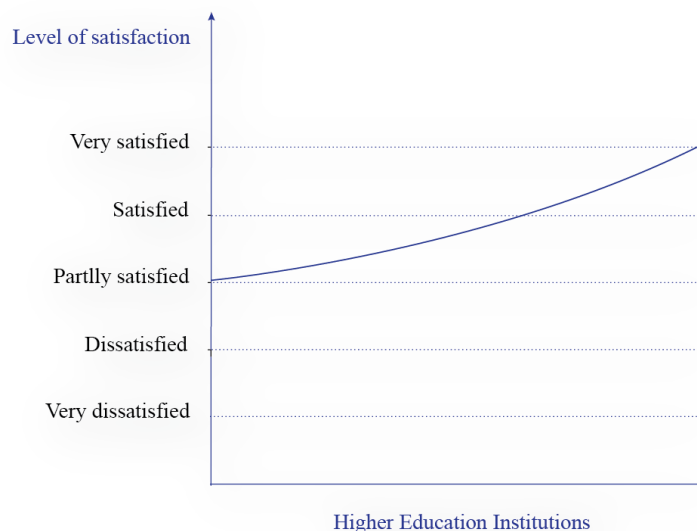
Comments:

- We have already prepared an activity diagram based on the panel's recommendations and started to implement it. Recommendations are practical and useful, it is only a matter of time needed for implementation. An example is the adaptation of a physical approach to an institution for students

with disabilities, which will be completed soon, learning aids are included, as well as training of staff to support these students - the first activity will be completed soon, but the other two will take longer.

- Panel members cited an error, for example, a building inscription, but overlooked to spot another area for improvement that we know existed.
- The recommendations were correct. Based on these recommendations, we have created an Action Plan for correcting any discrepancies observed.

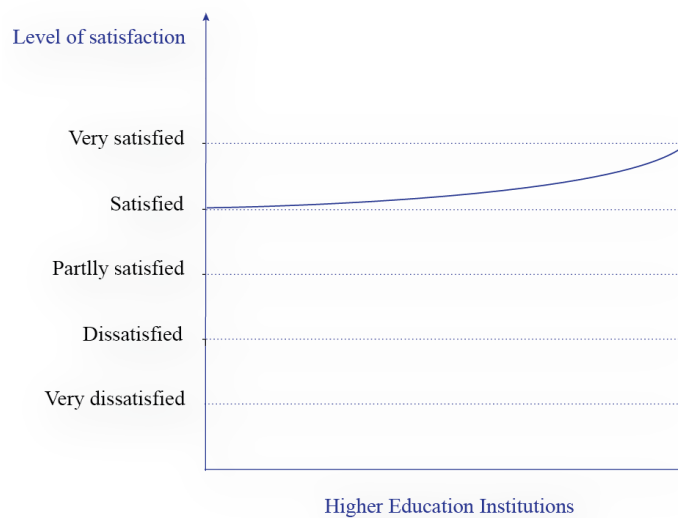7. *Level of satisfaction with the cooperation with the Agency in monitoring:*

Comment:

- We have drawn up a plan and a diagram of the following activities that will be sent to the Agency early next year.

8. *Is the accreditation process beneficial for higher education institutions?*

Comments:

- The approach should be a little 'sharp' in certain segments as it assesses the quality rather than the preconditions for work.

21

- Given that students are applying for the status of an institution and that the institution is listed as an institution that issues valid diplomas, the accreditation process is useful in relation to the recognition of higher education. The exception is health sciences, where there is some difference in subjects during enrollment in the second and third cycle of studies, but the reason is the discrepancy between the health systems in BiH and other countries. The same thing is happening with students coming to BiH.
- Registering with the HEA remains problematic and we need cooperation with higher education institutions abroad.
- So far, we are satisfied with the experience we have gained so far with the recognition of our diplomas abroad.

The comments and evaluations provided in the evaluation questionnaire for higher education institutions indicate that the issues related to the organization of the process by the Agency, as well as to the cooperation with the Agency in monitoring the implementation of the recommendations, are highly rated. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Agency staff had a professional and ethical approach when cooperating with the institutions at all stages of the external quality evaluation process.

On the other hand, institutions are least satisfied with the aspect regarding the cost of the accreditation process, especially privately owned higher education institutions. However, with all understanding regarding price dissatisfaction, there is practically very little room in this area to comply with the suggestions of the institutions, since the price is formed in such a way that more than 90% of the cost of the service are direct expenses of the procedure and it is not possible to reduce them.

There is also a high level of satisfaction with the selection of experts appointed to the commissions, the approach and work of the commission, as well as the recommendations made by the commissions of experts.

4.2 Analysis of evaluation questionnaires for members of expert committees

1. To what extent did the preparation process make it possible to become familiar with the accreditation procedure?			
Completely	Partly	Additional training or documentation is required	The documentation is too extensive
9		2	1
2. Have you gained insight into the documentation of the agency and higher education institutions within the stipulated timeframe?			
Completely	Partly	Additional training or documentation is required	The documentation is too extensive
7	5		
3. To what extent has the documentation provided by the higher education institution enabled the reconciliation of the situation in the institution?			
Completely	Partly	Additional training or documentation is required	The documentation is too extensive

5	3	4	

4. Are you satisfied with the organizational and technical support of the Higher Education Accreditation Agency of Republika Srpska:			
Totally pleased	Mostly satisfied	Mostly dissatisfied	Totally dissatisfied
9	3		

5. On the basis of the plan and program of the visit to the higher education institution, did you manage to see the level of satisfaction of the criteria and standards at the higher education institution:			
Totally pleased	Mostly satisfied	Mostly dissatisfied	Totally dissatisfied
11		1	

Recommendations for improving the accreditation procedure in relation to your experiences from other countries:

There is little time for the accreditation process itself; it takes a lot of time to prepare; the commission should be increased since preparatory actions are very long; harmonize the form of self-evaluation; include in the materials provided by the HEI a record of the Senate, the Teaching Council, a list of important events. Training for members of the Commission has always been welcome, it should be continuous through examples of good practice. Improve the way the criteria are assessed and define the role of the secretary more clearly by conducting the evaluation process (time, deadlines, interviewees, etc.) from a technical point of view.

In the preparation process, the Commission should have been emphasized the need to look at the quality of teaching, student satisfaction, review of pre-requisites, etc. In addition to the documentation in the application, it was also necessary to see the supplement of the diploma, the student card, the completed applications for the exam, the documentation of the appointment to the teacher ... It would be better to submit the completed documents (eg student survey), not just their form. The grading process is not the most accurate. The rating scale is based on the quality circle and is good for evaluating criteria A1, A2, A3, A7, A9, but is difficult to apply to criteria A4, A5, A6. It is hardly applicable to the criterion relating to study programs. ESG criteria promote a culture of quality, perhaps the Agency could work on developing its own criteria to evaluate the quality of study programs. HEIs to submit treaties or protocols on international cooperation, perhaps copies of papers (graduate, master, doctoral, etc.) more evenly involve all committee members in the discussions. Some discussions should be conducted more directly by the committee, e.g. to keep a sample of students random and to be selected by the commission. Check what has been done after the Commission's report (follow-up activities) and monitor the work done by the university to remedy the omission. Provide more time for final evaluation. Self-evaluations are incomplete (no relevant data), it may be necessary to send the HEI a pre-questionnaire with more specific questions and indicators (similar to peer review). At HEI, some documents of the quality system overlap, are called differently, and some are missing. Sometimes the form in the title of the document is satisfied, but it does not contain what it should. Consideration should also be given to the possibility of a person employed by the Agency as an official member of the Commission. This would ensure compliance with the prescribed procedures. It would also be good if the members of the Commission propose questions in advance of individual meetings, not within the checklist form. These issues would be coordinated by the President and members of the Commission at a pre-evaluation meeting. The plan of the visit was well thought out, but in the implementation the interviewees were not prepared and often distracted the committee from the topic and gave too

broad answers (often irrelevant). The first meeting with the accreditation team from the higher education institution should be organized to clearly define the expectations and desired mode of work during the visit, and to set defined hourly rates and a list of participants.

Analyzing the evaluation questionnaires filled out by the members of the expert commissions, one can observe the high level of satisfaction with the organizational and technical support by the Agency, as well as the plan and program of the visit to the higher education institution, and it can be concluded that the staff of the Agency in charge of coordinating the accreditation procedures performed their work professionally and professionally . From the above it is also evident that the visit plan is well conceived and can be used for further upgrading.

From this sample analysis, it can be concluded that there is a further need to improve the training and informing of HEI experts and staff about the importance and severity of external evaluation, as well as the accompanying activities, since many higher education institutions incorrectly set legal requirements with the requirements of the standards and criteria for accreditation. Nataional experts mostly have experience with the licensing panels for new higher education institutions and study programs, therefore the above training is required for them.

Experts' comments include the suggestion that fees for committees should be increased, which is completely contrary to the suggestions of higher education institutions.

There is a large number of comments from experts regarding the rating scale, and a more detailed analysis of the evaluation method is required in accordance with the recommendations given. Part of the comments also refers to the need for accreditation of study programs, as well as the definition of a list of mandatory questions before visiting the institution.

4.3 Disadvantages, limitations of analysis

If we look at the limitations of the analysis in the first place, we would notice that the larger the institution, the smaller the number of employees involved in preparing the response on satisfaction with the accreditation process, and it would be good for future procedures to be included in the survey and middle and lower management levels, such as heads of study programs, organizational units, etc. This would be of particular use when it comes to complex institutions with a large number of study programs, where surveying those directly engaged in study programs, not just in the rectorates, would give a more complete picture of the impact of the accreditation and quality assurance process as a whole on procedures. , procedures and development of the higher education institution and its study programs.

When it comes to the reports of expert commissions, although considerable effort has been made in standardizing the reports, the analysis shows that certain aspects are not covered in detail in different reports, which can affect the overall analysis of the reports in such a way that not all issues are equally comparable. This discrepancy was noticed in the analysis of the first reports, which resulted in the decision to establish an Accreditation Council as the body that will control the internal quality assurance of the Agency and to ensure that the work of expert committees is fully aligned with the requirements of standards and criteria. However, methods of further standardizing reports through the development of the Agency's information system should be considered.

5. Administrative framework in the field of accreditation and analysis of application of acts

The Framework Law on Higher Education in BiH establishes the organization of the various higher education systems in BiH, the responsibility of the competent authorities in this area, the establishment of law enforcement bodies and international obligations of BiH, and the manner of ensuring quality in the field of higher education. This Law establishes institutions at the BiH level for its implementation, and one of them is the Agency for Higher Education Development and Quality Assurance (hereinafter: HEA).

The HEA is an autonomous administrative organization whose responsibilities are governed by Articles 48, 49 and 50 of the Framework Law.

The Law on Higher Education of the Republika Srpska establishes the principles and goals of higher education in Republika Srpska, levels of higher education, establishment, organization and operation of higher education institutions, quality assurance in the field of higher education, bodies in the field of higher education, etc.

Quality assurance in the field of higher education, ie accreditation is within the competence of the Republika Srpska, and to that end, the Higher Education Accreditation Agency of the Republika Srpska was established.

The Agency has legal personality and is an independent and non-profit organization.

By carefully analyzing Article 48 (3,4,5,6) and Article 49 (4,5) of the Framework Law, it can be seen that the HEA is responsible for providing recommendations and advice, administering the Expert List and maintaining the Registry accredited institutions. None of the above mentioned HEA members has been given explicit authority to carry out external evaluation or accreditation, with the exception of the appointment of a panel of experts, which is strictly limited to the appointment by the competent education authorities, " with respect to appointment from the Expert List ". It is therefore not possible to challenge the appointment of a panel of experts in any respect other than verifying that the persons proposed are on the List of Experts.

It is noticeable that a considerable number of narrow scientific fields are not represented among the experts on the List, and that this is a particular problem, given that the focus of interest in the field of external evaluation is shifting to study programs. Also, when it comes to experts on a particular issue, it has been noticed with students from the list of experts that the list, for whose administration HEA is in charge, is not updated and the majority of students on the List lost that status or may have continued their studies in the third cycle.

In Article 48, paragraph (1) of the Framework Law, the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance **is responsible for**:
• "establishing clear, transparent and accessible criteria for the accreditation of higher education institutions and the adoption of standards setting minimum standards in the field of higher education".
The Agency implemented this legal provision through two documents:
1. Criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in BiH, i

2.   Decision on standards setting minimum standards in the field of higher education

The first article of the contested Decision states that the standards setting the minimum standards are contained in the "Rules for Achieving Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in BiH".

The content of the Decision contradicts the legal competencies, since it does not refer to "minimum standards in the field of higher education in BiH", but solely to the issue of internal quality assurance (point 1 of the Rules), whose implementation is the responsibility of higher education institutions and external quality assurance (point 2 of the Rules) the implementation of which is entrusted to the Entity and Cantonal Authorities, with the participation of the HEA with the competences given in the Framework Law.

Given that the contested decision was made without the consent of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska, this calls into question the legitimacy of the adoption of this act.

In Article 49, paragraph (4) of the Framework Law, the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance **is responsible for**:

•   "Appointment of a panel of experts, based on proposals from the competent educational authorities regarding the selection of experts from the established list of experts".

The Republika Srpska Agency establishes the proposal for a decision on the appointment of the members of the Commission of Experts and submits to the HEA, which should issue a Decision on the appointment of the Commission.

Although this Law did not set legal deadlines for issuing the above mentioned Decision, there were agreements regarding deadlines between the two Agencies, which can be seen from the minutes (21.06.2011) when it was determined that the deadline was 7 days.

The Law on Administrative Procedure of BiH, as well as the Law on General Administrative Procedure of Republika Srpska, have a deadline of 60 days for issuing a decision, and a deadline of 15 days for issuing an opinion.

Article 195 (5) of the Law on Administrative Procedure of BiH stipulates that the opinion must be given within 15 days from the day when it is requested:

"(5) An authority whose consent or opinion, or confirmation or approval is required to make a decision, shall give its consent or opinion, or confirmation or approval, within 15 days from the day it was requested, unless otherwise provided by special regulations. .

If that authority does not issue its act within that period and does not submit it to the decision-making authority, with which gives or refuses the consent, confirmation or approval, or opinion, it is considered that it gave the consent, confirmation or approval, or opinion, and if it has no statement, the competent authority may issue a decision without obtaining the consent or opinion or confirmation or approval, unless otherwise provided by special regulations. "

According to the Law on General Administrative Procedure of the Republika Srpska, that time limit is 30 days and Article 192 (5) reads as follows:

"Where a law or regulation specifies that an authority is required to obtain the opinion of another authority before a decision is issued, the decision shall be made after the opinion is obtained.
The authority whose consent or opinion is required for the adoption of the decision shall be obliged to give the consent or opinion within one month from the day it was requested, unless otherwise provided for by a special regulation. If that authority fails to notify the decision-making authority within a specified period of time to give or refuse consent, it shall be deemed to have given its consent, and if it does not give any opinion, the competent authority may issue a decision without obtaining an opinion, unless otherwise provided by special regulations. "

However, in practice, it has turned out that the appointments of expert comissions are unreasonably long, and that in some appointments the expert committees took months, which violated all possible deadlines.
Indent (5, 6,7)

The HEA makes a recommendation to the HEAARS on accreditation of a higher education institution or study program, based on the opinion of a panel of experts. When HEAARS submits a request for an accreditation recommendation based on the opinion of a panel of experts, the HEA verifies that the panel's opinion is in accordance with Article 48, paragraph 1, of the Framework Law.

In accordance with the agreement between the two Agencies (June 21, 2011) it was agreed that the recommendation will be issued within 15 days.

Despite this, the issuance of the recommendation has also been waiting for months, and after repeated requests for issuance of the recommendation, and after several months after the longest deadlines for action, the Agency of the Republic of Srpska issued a decision on accreditation without a HEA recommendation in view of its obligations to a higher education institution on the basis of a contract signed by the Republika Srpska Agency and an institution in the process of accreditation.

Indent (8)

• "keeping a state register of accredited higher education institutions"

The National Register of Accredited Higher Education Institutions (as well as other registers) is a book that contains data and documents on accredited higher education institutions that are registered in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

According to the regulations of the Republika Srpska, the Law on Higher Education and the Rulebook on Keeping the Register of Higher Education Institutions and the Register of Teachers and Associates, the Ministry of Education and Culture maintains the registry and submits the decision on HEA accreditation.

The HEA is obliged to enter the institution in the register on the basis of a final decision, and if it finds irregularities, it can initiate the procedure for deleting the said institution from the register according to the procedure prescribed by law.

Although it was an administrative procedure, entry into the Registry was again pending beyond all prescribed deadlines, and the HEA issued decisions on entry into the Register in which the term of accreditation was linked to the entry in the Register, which is legal illogical since individual accreditation decisions issued almost one year before being entered in the Register. A special precedent is evident in the situation of Slobomir P University, Bijeljina, where the HEA refused without legal basis to enter a final decision on accreditation. Namely, the HEA has not challenged the decision in the legal order, but it completely unlawfully refuses to enter the decision in the Register, thus placing the institution in an extremely unequal position.

6. Conclusion

After analyzing the duration of accreditation procedures for different institutions, it was found that by far the longest phases of the procedure were awaited, in which the HEA acted (appointment of a committee of experts, issuance of a recommendation and entry in the Register of accredited institutions). It is unacceptable that administrative steps take much longer than the essential quality assurance procedures in the accreditation process (analysis of documentation by a Commission of experts, preparation for a visit to the institution, visits to institutions and preparation of the final accreditation report), as it gives the impression that the procedure is bureaucratized at the expense of higher education institutions, academia and students. The Republika Srpska Agency sought to carry out its proceedings within a reasonable time, far shorter than the statutory deadlines, and will continue to cooperate with the HEA with the aim of simplifying procedures and activities at least to the legal deadlines.

In addition to the aforementioned measures for improving the quality of external evaluation, it should be borne in mind that in the following accreditation cycles special attention is paid to study programs, and that the criteria for accreditation must be developed in this direction, both generic criteria for all study programs and criteria related to specific scientific areas, fields and occupations. The focus of observation should be shifted to study programs, taking into account the finding of a model that would be both expedient and cost-effective since a large number of institutions expressed dissatisfaction with the costs of the procedure, and given the general situation regarding higher education revenues in Republika Srpska.

When it comes to the experts who participated in the first cycle accreditation process, it is noticeable that a significant number of narrow scientific fields are not represented among the experts on the List, and before starting the accreditation of study programs, this shortcoming should be taken into account and efforts should be made to engage the necessary experts from the country, region and abroad especially taking into account the representation of all occupational profiles and expertise. The same obstacle is even more pronounced when it comes to student experts, and it is necessary to establish more direct cooperation with student representatives in order to engage as many students from different study programs as possible in the accreditation bloc, primarily students of the first and second cycle of study.

It is also necessary to proceed with the continuous training of all experts engaged in accreditation procedures, taking into account the need for experts in all fields to participate equally in the work of the committees.

Despite the fact that accreditation has been approached by almost all institutions and the number of students studying at non-accredited institutions is relatively low, it is necessary to strive to define the obligation of accreditation more precisely in legal regulations so that institutions have a clearly defined deadline when they have to enter the accreditation process after have obtained a work permit on the basis of meeting the minimum standards for getting started.

Legal solutions need to be further specified on other issues such as the possibility of appeals and complaints, strengthening the independence of the Agency, improving and developing mechanisms for external evaluation of quality in higher education, etc. The most appropriate legal solution would be the adoption of a special law on quality assurance in higher education or a separate chapter within the law on higher education that would deal with issues in this area in much greater detail.

7. List of accredited Higher Education Institutions

No.	Name of the Higher Education Institution	Decision No.	Accreditation date	Reaccreditation date
1.	University for bussiness studies Banja Luka	49/13	27.02.2013	27.02.2018
2.	Higher school Banja Luka College	48/13	27.02.2013	27.02.2018
3.	Independent University Banja Luka	76/13	28.03.2013	28.03.2018
4.	University of East Sarajevo	77/13	01.04.2013	01.04.2018
5.	University of Banja Luka	178/13	15.08.2013	15.08.2018
6.	Higher school of Business Services East Sarajevo - Sokolac	69-2/12	27.02.2014	27.02.2019
7.	Sinergija University, Bijeljina	203-6/12	18.03.2014	18.03.2019
8.	Communication College of Banja Luka, Kapa Fi	100-12/13	19.03.2014	19.03.2019
9.	Slobomir P University	85-8/14	26.12.2014	21.01.2020
10.	Paneuropean University Apeiron Banja Luka	01/1.3.74/16	23.03.2016	24.03.2021

No.	Name of the Higher Education Institution	Decision No.	Accreditation date	Reaccreditation date
11.	Higher school Primus, Gradiska	01/1.3.78/16	28.03.2016	28.03.2021
12.	Higher school for Applied and Legal Sciences Prometheus Banja Luka	01/1.3.107/16	18.04.2016	18.04.2021
13.	Higher Business and Technical School Doboj	01/1.3.153/17	04.10.2017	04.10.2022
14.	University for Business Engineering and Management Banja Luka	01/1.3.152/17	04.10.2017	04.10.2022

8. List of standard terminology in the field of quality assurance

Quality is a set of characteristics of a higher education institution or study program, which proves the level of satisfaction of the needs and expectations of students and other stakeholders in the higher education process.

Quality assurance is an aspect of the management of a higher education institution that plans, supervises and enhances key teaching and learning processes, with the ultimate goal of building stakeholder confidence that the expected level of quality will be achieved. Includes activities such as evaluation, accreditation and audit.

A quality assurance system is a set of procedures, activities and resources of a higher education institution required for quality assurance.

Accreditation is the process of ensuring the quality of a higher education institution or study program based on the self-evaluation of a higher education institution and the evaluation of independent experts, with the aim of identifying and improving the quality of higher education within the European Higher Education Area.

The list of experts is a list listing the names and data of national and international experts who meet the criteria for participating in the accreditation process.

The Commission of Experts is an independent body that, in the process of external evaluation, determines the fulfillment of standards and quality criteria in the work of higher education institutions.

Self-evaluation is a process by which a higher education institution checks the effectiveness and efficiency of a Quality Assurance System and its processes in a systematic and documented manner with the aim of initiating improvement projects and activities.

External evaluation is an objective and impartial evaluation of the quality assurance system against applicable standards and criteria by the Commission of Experts for the purpose of accreditation of the

higher education institution and the study programs it implements.

Audit (from ISO 9000: 2015) is a systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining objective evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which the verification criteria are met.

Study program review is a type of external audit aimed at external evaluation of the study program, ie assessment of the conformity of the study program structure and content with the applicable standards in certain educational and scientific fields, as well as requirements related to the learning outcomes, qualifications and occupations of graduates.