

# European Quality Assurance in Education and Romania's Position within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

**Nicolae George DRĂGULĂNESCU**

University Polytechnics of Bucharest, Romania

## **Abstract**

The Bologna Declaration - adopted in 1999 by the education ministers of the EC Member States - has encouraged European cooperation in the field of Quality assurance in Higher education, mainly aiming to develop comparable and compatible criteria and methodologies for assessment. EHEA (European Higher Education Area) was invented, drafted and started to be implemented in order to offer some perspectives of progress to European universities, respecting both national diversity and the principles of university autonomy. But EHEA is barely an early stage and further development of it demands new efforts to eliminate existing barriers and to develop a favorable framework in order to promote higher education policies which have to be consistent and adequate to all requirements, both nationally and at European level. Within this process, internal and external assurance quality of higher education can be a catalyst since its purpose is to generate, consolidate and develop the confidence/ trust of all stakeholders in the capability of universities to satisfy all stakeholders' requirements. In spite of the fact that, currently, all the EHEA Member States have already established their own systems of external quality assurance, many researches have found multiple differences - especially regarding philosophy, policies and strategies to address internal quality assurance within universities. This paper refers to progresses made in developing both internal and external quality assurance within the EHEA, focusing on features that are approaching or differentiating the Romanian approach in respect to international references and national requirements.

**Keywords:** higher education, quality assurance in education, internal quality assurance of education, referentials

## **References:**

- [1] Apple, M. W. (2005) - Education, markets, and an audit culture. *Critical Quarterly*, 47(1-2), 11-29
- [2] ARACIS (2013) - Self-Evaluation Report (for renewal of its membership within ENQA) , Bucharest, 2013 [http://www.aracis.ro/fileadmin/ARACIS/Informatii\\_publice/SER\\_2013.pdf](http://www.aracis.ro/fileadmin/ARACIS/Informatii_publice/SER_2013.pdf)
- [3] Ball, S. J. (2003). The teacher's soul and the terrors of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy*, 18(2), 215-228
- [4] Brennan, J.&Shah, T (2000) - Quality assessment and institutional change. Experiences from 14 countries. *Higher Education*, 40(3), 331-349
- [5] China,R. (2012) - Improving the quality of pre-university education based on the ISO 9001 Standard and the EFQM Excellence Model, Doctoral Thesis, University of Bucharest, 2012, Bucharest

- [6] Dragulanescu, N., China,R, Colceag,F., Militaru,C. (2013) - „Asigurarea calității educației - o abordare proactivă” („Quality Assurance in Education - a Proactive Approach”), Editura Standardizarea, 2013, București
- [7] Dragulanescu, N., Stoica,M., China, R.(2013) - Quality Assurance in Education Systems of South Eastern Europe - Necessity or "Ballast" ? , 7th International Working Conference „TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT - ADVANCED AND INTELLIGENT APPROACHES, 4th-7th of June,2013, Belgrade, Serbia
- [8] Dragulanescu,N., China, R. (2011) - The misleading approach of <Quality Assurance> concept in Education, 6th International Working Conference „TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT - ADVANCED AND INTELLIGENT APPROACHES, 7th-11th of June, 2011, Belgrade, Serbia
- [9] Dragulanescu, N., China, R. (2010) - Quality Assurance in Education - from the European Project to the Romanian Outcome, Workshop of Romanian Society for Quality Assurance, SRAC, September 2010
- [10] Dragulanescu,N., China, R. (2010) - „Oportune Corrective Actions and Corrections of Current Romanian Approach of Quality Assurance in Education”, Journal <Quality - access to success>, Romanian Society for Quality Assurance, SRAC, no.4, 5, 6, 7, 8/ 2010
- [11] Dragulanescu,N., China,R. (2010) - Quality Assurance of Education in Romania - Proposals aiming to increase its credibility, effectiveness and efficiency - Journal <OPTIMUM Q>, Romanian Foundation for Quality Promotion, FRPC, no.1/2010
- [12] Dragulanescu,N. (2009) - Quality Assurance in Education - Slogans, Myths and Good Practices, 5th International Working Conference “Total Quality Management”, 1st- 4th June, 2009, Belgrade, Serbia
- [13] Dragulanescu, N. (2007) - Obstacles To Implementing Quality Management In Romanian Higher Education, 7th International Conference of the Central and Eastern European Countries “National Quality Programs and National Quality Awards - The Way to a Better Life” - Iasi, 5th-6th of December, Romania, 2007
- [14] Eggins, H. (Ed.) (2014) - Drivers and Barriers to Achieving Quality in Higher Education, Sense Publishers, Rotterdam
- [15] ENQA - Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, 2005, 2015, Helsinki, Finland
- [16] ENQA + CNE - Références et lignes directrices pour le management de la qualité dans l'espace européen de l'enseignement supérieur (translation in French of ENQA document Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area}, January 2006, Paris, France
- [17] EUA - European Universities Association (Andrea Blättler, Lucien Bollaert, Fiona Crozier, Josep Grifoll, Áine Hyland, Tia Loukkola, Barbara Michalk, Allan Päll and Bjørn Stensaker) (2010) - Building bridges: Making sense of quality assurance in European, national and institutional contexts, A selection of papers from the 5th European Quality Assurance Forum, 18-20. November 2010, Hosted by University Claude Bernard Lyon 1, France
- [18] Geven, K., Maricut,A. - „Forms in Search of Substance: Quality and Evaluation in Romanian Universities”, BP Researchers Conference, Bucharest, 24-26.11.2014
- [19] Geven, K., Sârbu.O., Santa,R., Adina Maricut,A., Sabic, N. (2015) - Why Do Romanian Universities Fail to Internalize Quality Assurance? (in: Adrian Curaj, Ligia Deca, Eva Egron- Polak, Jamil Salmi Editors - Higher Education Reforms in Romania, Between the Bologna Process and National Challenges, 43-62, Springer Verlag, 2015)
- [20] Gorga,A. - „Quality games in higher education; the cases of Romania and Switzerland”, BP Researchers Conference, Bucharest, 24-26.11.2014

- [21] Harvey, Lee, Williams, J. (2010) - Fifteen Years of Quality in Higher Education, 2 Parts (review of the papers published in Quality in Higher Education, from its inception in 1995 to 2010), Quality in Higher Education, Volume 16, Issue 2
- [22] Harvey, Lee (2010) - Twenty years of trying to make sense of QA: the misalignment of QA with institutional quality frameworks and quality culture, [http://www.eua.be/Libraries/eqaf-2010/WGSII\\_7\\_Papers\\_Harvey.pdf?sfvrsn=0](http://www.eua.be/Libraries/eqaf-2010/WGSII_7_Papers_Harvey.pdf?sfvrsn=0)
- [23] Kopstein, J. (2003) - Post communist democracy: Legacies and outcomes. Comparative Politics, 35 (2) (January 1), 231-250
- [24] Păunescu, M., Florian, B., & Hâncean, G.-M. (2012) - Internalizing quality assurance in higher education: Challenges of transition in enhancing the institutional responsibility for quality. In A. Curaj, P. Scott, L. Vlasceanu, & L. Wilson (Eds.), European higher education at the crossroads (pp. 317-337). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands
- [25] Păunescu, M., Vlăsceanu, L., & Miroiu, A. (Eds.). (2011) - Calitatea învățământului superior din România. O Analiză instituțională a tendințelor actuale (The Quality of romanian higher education. An institutionalist analysis on current trends). Iași, Ed.Polirom
- [26] Reisz, Mathew - Europe is told to relearn the ABCs of quality assurance, 2010, <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storyCode=414364&sectioncode=26>
- [27] SAR - Romanian Academic Society (2013) - Quality assurance in basic education in South Eastern Europe, What works in our region (Report, in English), Bucharest, January 2013 + Policy Brief #62 The Romanian quality assurance system in pre-university education - Can we change forms without substance? (leaflet, in Romanian), Bucharest, January 2013, SAR, [www.sar.org.ro](http://www.sar.org.ro)
- [28] Stoica, M. (2012) - Assessment of quality of pre-university education. Dynamics and perspectives. A comparative study, Doctoral Thesis, University of Bucharest, 2012
- [29] Tomusk, V.(2004) -The open world and closed societies.Essays on higher education policies in transition. New York:Palgrave Macmillan
- [30] Vlăsceanu, L., Hâncean, M.-G., Voicu B. & Tufis,C. (2010) - Statistical distributions, interpretations and options. The state of quality in the Romanian higher education. Quality Barometer 2009, Bucuresti, ARACIS
- [31] Vlăsceanu, L., Miroiu, A., Păunescu, M., & Hâncean, M.-G. (Ed.) (2011) - Barometrul calității 2010. Starea calității în învățământul superior din România (The Barometer on Quality 2010. The State of Quality in Romanian Higher Education). Brașov: Editura Universității Transilvania.