

## ESG Compliance challenged by national regulations

EQAR Members Dialogue

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Beate Treml, EQAR Register Committee Vice-Chair

Blazhe Todorovski, Policy and Project officer

# About the Register



- Official register of agencies that substantially comply with the ESG
- Decision making on ESG compliance → Register Committee (11 members + 4 observers)
- 56 EQAR Registered agencies (Oct. 2024)

# Why EQAR registration



- **Demonstrate substantial compliance with the ESG**
  - Registration is a trusted status, guarantee to public
  - Used in EHEA implementation reporting
  - Recognition of quality assurance results across borders
  - Access to DEQAR → vouch for QA'ed HEIs/programmes

# About the Register Committee



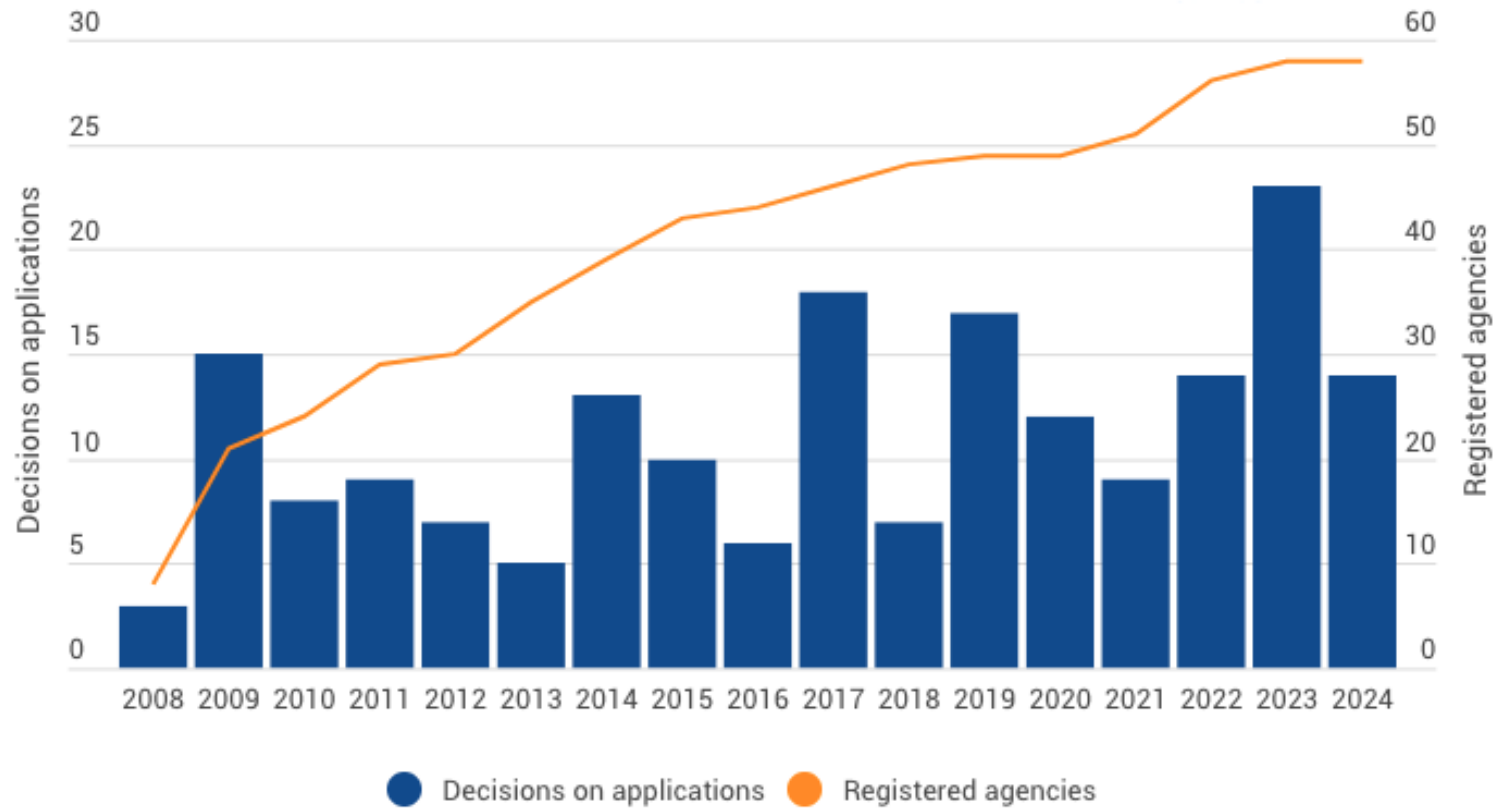
- Composition = President + 11 Register Committee members + 3-5 governmental observers
- The Register Committee comprises 11 members with experience in quality assurance and higher education who act as independent experts and in their individual capacity.
- Each Founding Member (ENQA, ESU, EUA, EURASHE) nominates two members of the Register Committee and one member is nominated by each Social Partner Member (BUSINESSEUROPE, Education International).
- The Register Committee is approved by the General Assembly for a mandate of two years, and a member may be renominated up to three times.

# About the Register Committee



- Observers are elected by the General Assembly for a two-year mandate.
- The four governmental observers attend the meetings of the Register Committee and closely follow the work of the Committee. While the observers do not take part in the Register Committee's deliberations, they may ask questions on the Committee's proceedings and will be invited to offer their feedback during general discussions.
- The Register Committee receives, evaluates and decides upon applications for inclusion on the Register or renewal of registration, substantive change reports and third-party complaints.
- The Committee is also responsible for adopting Procedures for Applications in consultation with the General Assembly.

# The Register throughout the years



# Resources used by the RC when making decisions



## Policy on Use and Interpretation of the ESG

for the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies

- Explain how Register Committee makes decisions
- Guidance re. activities and scope of the ESG
- Affirm: **standards** are normative, **guidelines** are not
- **Reports should at least address:** for all standards, aim to assist in drafting report and avoiding questions afterwards
- **Interpretations:** for standards where needed, address specific cases

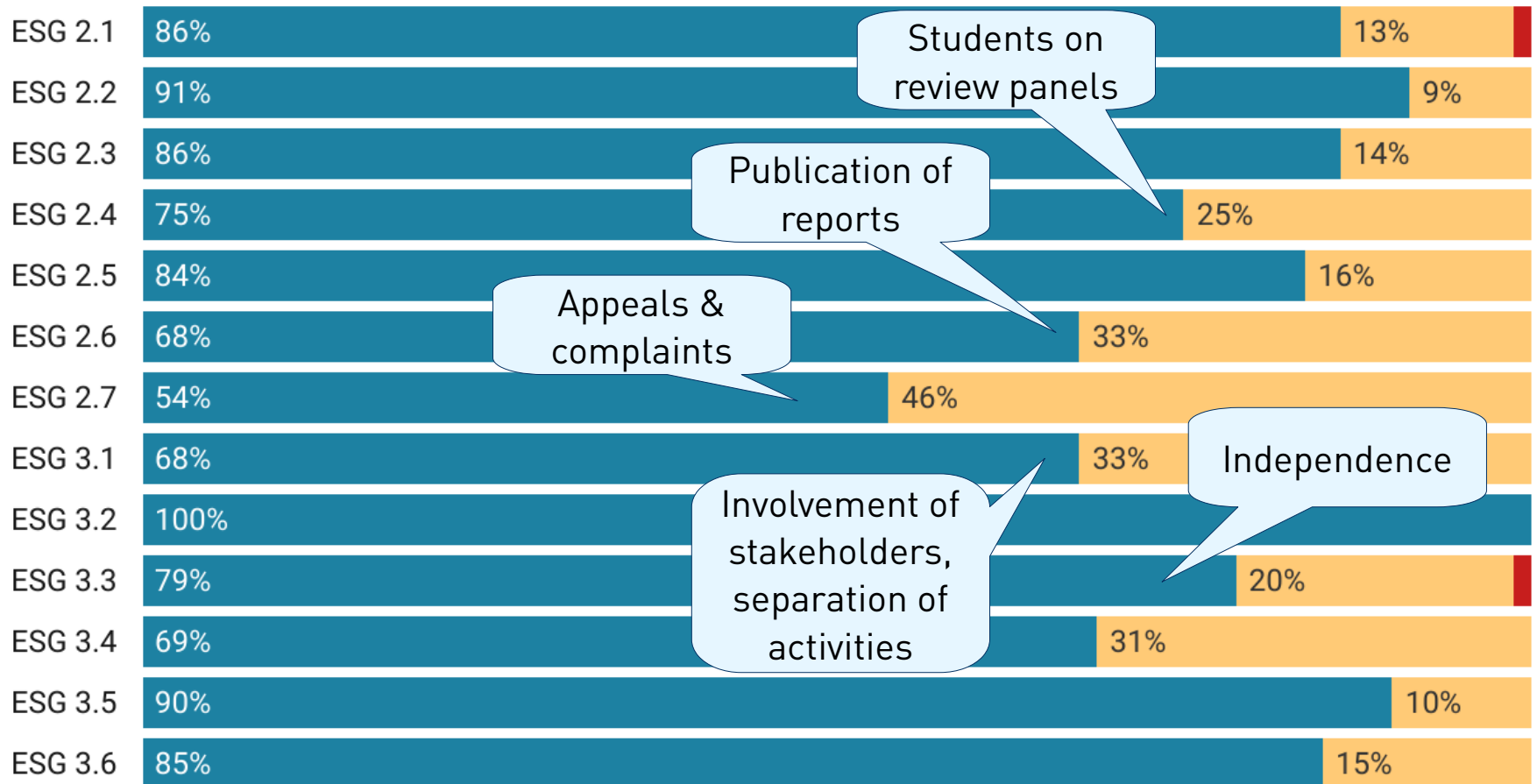
## EQAR database of precedents

- Provides an overview of EQAR's past decisions and the grounds for them by standard

# ESG Compliance: typical challenges



■ Compliance 
 ■ Partial compliance 
 ■ Non-compliance





# Typical challenges per standards



- **ESG 2.2 – Designing methodologies fit for purpose**
  - Lack of agency ownership of the methodologies
  - Stakeholder involvement in the development of methodologies
  - Lack of flexibility of the system
- **ESG 2.3 – Implementing processes**
  - E.g. Exclusively desk-based procedures without experts
- **ESG 2.4 – Peer-review experts**
  - Lack of student involvement in panels

# Typical challenges per standards



- **ESG 2.5 – Criteria for outcomes**
  - Lack of formal mechanisms
  - Unclear criteria
- **ESG 2.6 – Reporting**
  - Publication of reports
  - Publication of negative reports and decisions
- **ESG 2.7 – Complaints and Appeals**
  - No possibility to appeal decision within the agency - Appeals procedure defined by law (through court)

# Typical challenges per standards



- **ESG 3.1 – Activity, policy and processes for quality assurance**
  - Lack of stakeholders involvement in governance
- **ESG 3.3 – Independence**
  - Lack of organisational, operational and independence of formal outcomes
- **ESG 3.5 – Resource**
  - Financial independence, reliance on temporary funding sources
  - Human resources, secondment of staff

# Conclusions



- **Taking into consideration:**
  - Size and diversity of HE system
  - Maturity of agency
  - National legislation cannot serve as a justification for not complying with a standard

## Questions for discussion

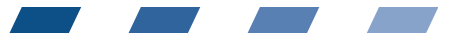


- How can governments help agency to reach substantial compliance with the ESG?
- How can EQAR help and support its governmental members?



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Questions? Comments?



Thank you for your attention!

Contact:

Beate – [beate.treml@gmx.at](mailto:beate.treml@gmx.at)

Blazhe – [blazhe.todorovski@eqar.eu](mailto:blazhe.todorovski@eqar.eu)

