

# Support to strengthening the higher education system in Azerbaijan



Twinning project ENI/2018/395-401

## Mission Report

Short-Term Mission on Activity 3.4 Hold a training workshop for higher education institutions on how to conduct self-evaluation process

(April 29 – May 3, 2019)

1. Name and Function of the Expert:

Full name of expert

Ms. Jolita Butkiene, Lithuania

Signature

Full name of expert

Ms. Nora Skaburskiene

Signature



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## 2. **Objective and Tasks of the Mission:**

The mission is carried out within the framework of:

### **COMPONENT 3: THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM IS FURTHER DEVELOPED TO REFLECT THE STUDENT-CENTEREDNESS OF STUDY PROGRAMMES**

Activity 3.4 Hold a training workshop for higher education institutions on how to conduct self-evaluation process

Benchmarks for this activity are:

- A training workshop for higher education institutions on self-evaluation is conducted



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### 3. Time schedule of mission:

Date and Time	Activity
Monday 29th of April 2019	A meeting at the Accreditation and Nostrification Office to prepare for the workshops to be held at pilot HEIs. Reviewing the self-evaluation reports submitted by pilot HEIs. Stakeholders: See the Annex
Tuesday 30th of April 2019	A round table with members of self-evaluation groups involved in writing SER on chemical engineering (ASOIU, SSU, BEU, BSU) and computer engineering (ASOIU, BEU, AzTU, SSU) study programmes. Stakeholders: See the Annex
Wednesday 1st of May 2019	A round table with members of self-evaluation groups involved in writing SER on Physics study programme (BSU, SSU) and Computer Sciences study programme (BSU, ASOIU) in Baku State University. Stakeholders: See the Annex
Thursday 2nd of May 2019	A round table with members of self-evaluation groups involved in writing SER on Foreign Language Teacher study programme (AUL, Khazar University, SSU, ASPU) and Math and Informatics study programme (BSU, ASPU, BEU, SSU) in Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University. Stakeholders: See the Annex
Friday 3rd of May 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Final discussions with Vice-rectors from each of the pilot universities and wrap up of the relevant issues for the next period of SER writing in Accreditation and Nostrification Office.</li> </ul> Stakeholders: See the Annex <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Report writing</li> </ul>

### 4. Relevant Background Information/State of Affairs regarding the mission

Only institutional evaluation has been performed in higher education institutions of Azerbaijan so far. The first Twinning project implemented in 2015-2017 supported the then newly established (2016) Accreditation and Nostrification Office at the Ministry of Education to build up its capacity in the field of quality assurance in compliance with the principles of the European Higher Education Area. The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Azerbaijan (AzSG) reflecting best EU quality assurance practices were developed jointly by the Twinning experts and ANO staff and pilot institutional evaluations were carried out in three pilot universities. At current stage the Accreditation and Nostrification Office needs to build its



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capacity in the field of study programme accreditation. As part of the Component III of the ongoing Twinning project certain number of documents concerning the programme evaluation (Handbook for Requirements and Methodologies for Programme Evaluation, Guidelines for Assessing Competence-based and Student-Centered Approach of St.Ps, Grid for Self-assessment of Competence-orientedness and Student-centeredness of Study Programmes) have been already developed by the Twinning experts to ensure the compliance of programme accreditation practices in Azerbaijan with EU best practices. As a next step, the higher education institutions were trained on how to conduct a self-evaluation of study programmes and were instructed to write the initial draft of self-evaluation reports on relevant programmes and submit them both in Azerbaijani and English before 25<sup>th</sup> of April. Thus, the objective of the current mission is to hold meetings with the HEIs representatives involved in the SER writing and to support them in this process.

## **5. Achievement of the Expected Results**

Planned action was achieved. Six trainings were conducted with the participation of representatives of higher education institutions of Azerbaijan, from programmes selected for pilot evaluation. On the final day of the mission a meeting and discussions with the Vice-rectors of the participating higher education institutions was held in ANO premises.

## **6. Unexpected Results**

*State if any unexpected results were identified during the mission. Add any relevant comments.*

## **7. Issues Left Open After the Mission**

The higher education institutions are further encouraged to study the requirements for conducting self-evaluation and examples provided and to improve self-evaluation reports.

## **8. Recommendations (including recommendation for future missions)**

The experts have studied self-evaluation reports that were received prior to the mission. The general remarks for all self-evaluation reports were provided for all participants of the trainings during three days meetings.

The experts have formulated basic important points according to each evaluation area that should be pointed out in all self-evaluation reports (see the table in the Annex 1).

It should be noted that only some higher education institutions have formed and appointed the groups for developing self-evaluation reports. Most of members of the groups participated in trainings given within the framework of the TWINNING project.



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The positive side is that some of the institutions tried to work according to evaluation areas and criteria given in the Methodology. However, other institutions mentioned that they have not seen the table with evaluation areas and criteria therefore it was difficult for them to think of what aspects to cover in each evaluation part. It is reflected in the structure of the reports as not all evaluation criteria were covered in the reports.

It should be stated that in general the self-evaluation reports lack analytical approach. A lot of quantitative information was provided, but it was not being analysed.

It is recommended to send the list of evaluation areas together with criteria in indicators to be covered to all institutions involved.

Those institutions that are preparing self-evaluation reports in English should receive English version of the evaluation areas and criteria as well.

The second draft of self-evaluation reports should be submitted in English as well in order for international experts to be able to give individual feed-back to the self-evaluation groups.

It is recommended to develop a vocabulary with the main terminology of quality assurance. As an example the Analytical Quality Glossary developed by INQAAHE could be used: <http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/>

The examples of self-evaluation reports provided by the experts should be distributed to the participants of the training for learning purposes.

Higher education institutions can also review the evaluation reports prepared by the experts in order to familiarize themselves with possible remarks and recommendations of the experts. The evaluation reports could be accessed:

[http://www.skvc.lt/uploads/valuations/docs/434412\\_KU%20Chemical%20engineering%20BA.pdf](http://www.skvc.lt/uploads/valuations/docs/434412_KU%20Chemical%20engineering%20BA.pdf)

[http://www.skvc.lt/uploads/valuations/docs/433565\\_VU\\_KHF\\_Business\\_Informatics\\_MA\\_2016.pdf](http://www.skvc.lt/uploads/valuations/docs/433565_VU_KHF_Business_Informatics_MA_2016.pdf)

[http://www.skvc.lt/uploads/valuations/docs/434681\\_VU%20%20Anglu%20ir%20kita%20uzsienio%20kalba\\_2016.pdf](http://www.skvc.lt/uploads/valuations/docs/434681_VU%20%20Anglu%20ir%20kita%20uzsienio%20kalba_2016.pdf)

ANO should plan in the future further trainings for higher education institutions' staff on a regular basis. The topics of the training should cover:

- Enhancement of quality assurance procedures within HEIs;
- Learning outcomes, teaching methods and students' assessment methods;
- Calculation of students' workload based on ECTS;
- Process of self-evaluation.

## 9. Acknowledgments (if any)

Experts would like to thank ANO staff and coordinator of the Twinning project as well as interpreters for support during the mission.

## Annexes

### 1. Most important points for self-evaluation report



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2. Three examples of self-evaluation reports
3. Lists of participants from the round tables held at pilot universities



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