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Project acronym: QFORTE

Project title: QFORTE - Enhancement of Quality Assurance in Higher Education System in Moldova (Ref. nr.: 618742-EPP-1-2020-1-MD-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP)

Overview of Higher Education. Quality Assurance in the Republic of Moldova. State of play on institutional accreditation

Country workshop
05 December, 2023

Moldovan Higher Education Quality Assurance on the MD-European Agenda

2023 Communication on EU Enlargement policy (REPORT)

The country's **education system** is broadly aligned with EU policy and practice, although students' learning outcomes lag behind the European average.

The national qualification framework services have strengthened cooperation with the European Qualification Framework Advisory Group.

In **higher education**, in July 2022, the government adopted a higher education reform to consolidate the national network of universities and strengthen integration between education and research. In 2023 five Moldovan universities have been accredited at European level, and Moldova benefits from the European dimension of the Erasmus+ programme.

MER progress on the international institutional accreditation in the framework of the QForte Project

- coordination of implications of 5 universities in the process of the external evaluation undertaken by ARACIS
- updating of the Methodology on external evaluation of study programmes and institutions (GD 616/2016)
- introduction in the Education Code of specific provisions for external evaluation of study programmes per cluster/group
- introduction in the Education Code the possibility of external evaluation undertaken by foreign Agencies, provided that they are registered in EQAR (art. 124, (4))
- coordination of the WB Program - reinforcing of ANACEC capacities

RESULTS OF INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION OF 5 HEI IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE QFORTE PROJECT

- 5 decisions of ACCREDITATION issued by ARACIS
- 5 semi-structured evaluation reports done by International evaluators (experts from Bulgaria - USARB, Romania- AMTAP, Romania-USM, Ukraine - USC, Hungary - ASEM)
- 5 structured evaluation reports done by students representatives

AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE 5 HEI UNDERTAKING EXTERNAL EVALUATION: strong points and areas to improve

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Sufficient infrastructure for the teaching/learning process, research facilities, dormitories (although some in bad conditions)
- Innovation centers developed in all universities under evaluation, thus fostering research and engagement with the labour market and fundraising
- Elaborate libraries and amenities for students to connect with peers and have access to research and educational journals

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Infrastructure not proportionally available to different facilities and departments
- Accommodation infrastructure need perfecting and development
- Book collections not renewed, quite obsolete
- Insufficient access for disabled people at different levels

AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE 5 HEI UNDERTAKING EXTERNAL EVALUATION: strong points and areas to improve

TEACHING STAFF

- Skilled staff with scientific degrees (although a large number on a cumulative basis)
- Fair and transparent procedures for staff selection and retention in the system (performance bonuses, continuing professional training opportunities)
- Staff trained on using online platforms and delivering courses online

TEACHING STAFF

- Insufficient long-term teaching positions
- Insufficient use of innovative technologies in the process of teaching
- Age of teaching staff above average
- Relatively low level of effort on research from the teaching staff

AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE 5 HEI UNDERTAKING EXTERNAL EVALUATION: strong points and areas to improve

INTERNATIONALIZATION

- High number of joint programmes developed (mainly in partnership with Romanian universities)
- Relatively high number of international projects implemented (though many of them in partnership with more advanced universities)
- Development by universities of short term/long term internationalization strategies/white papers
- Benchmarking of study programmes with international equivalent programmes

INTERNATIONALIZATION

- Reduced number of incoming mobility students and teachers
- Insufficient knowledge of foreign language by students and staff
- Low number of co-tutelle PhD programmes
- Internationalization structures of the HEI insufficiently ensured with resources and funded
- Not enough visibility of the HEI academic offers in other languages or on the media

AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE 5 HEI UNDERTAKING EXTERNAL EVALUATION: strong points and areas to improve

RESEARCH

- Agreements on research with other international institutions
- Wide variety of PhD programmes provided
- Balanced number of national and international scientific events participating at

RESEARCH

- Insufficient publications in international scientific journals
- Reduced support for individual researchers for application at international projects
- Academic entrepreneurship of staff and graduates insufficiently developed

Lessons learnt for MER

- Continue efforts for teachers attraction and retention in the system
- Reinforce management structures and provide support in constant monitoring of activities
 - Provide sufficient funding for balanced development of all institutions
 - Develop a performance oriented policy
 - Continue engaging international structures in the development of HEI
 - Collaborate closely with ANACE in fortifying the HE system



THANK YOU

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