



# Single accreditation of joint programmes: turning Bologna guideline into reality

Aurelija Valeikienė, Deputy Director of SKVC | 31 May 2017 | Vilnius

## Single accreditation of Joint Programmes



A [proposed] solution for the HEIs undergoing external QA procedures at the national level

- ✓ To tackle accreditation obligations
- ✓ To address [possible] substantial differences preventing from full recognition abroad

Known problems of multiple procedures

Few cases of single accreditation yet

Impact assessment pending

## Single accreditation of Joint Programmes



- Accepting decisions by other agencies
- Abandoning additional national criteria
- Implementing one procedure / another format of cooperation among the agencies

## Solutions to differences in accreditation terms, decisions, consequences?

- Abandoning programme accreditations instead of institutional reviews?
- Sticking with the EA – 6 years!
- Completely lifting JPs from national legislation and making them exempt from all specific requirements, except for agreed Bologna commitments, like applying ECTS, issuing DS, formulating LOs by EHEA-QF, allowing the range of ECTS per cycle

In order to find a  
solution,  
one should know  
what the problem is.

The **“real”** problem.



## Slow progress, because of...

### Technical reasons

- ✓ **Spread:** despite huge personal significance to students and institutions, interest of international organizations to promote, joint programmes are too few
- ✓ **High level of specificity:** skills on the part of the agency needed, as well having /training experts who are able to properly assess joint provision and carry accreditation under the EA

## Slow progress, because of...

### Economic reasons

- ✓ **Bearing the cost:** similarly as funding of joint programmes is not completely resolved, so is the issue who will pay the bill for external quality assurance, including the cost of translation
- ✓ **Responsibility of national/regional budget spending:** “owing” QA enables controlling public budget spending for studies

## Slow progress, because of...

### Educational reasons

- ✓ **Lack of knowledge and understanding:** when the commitment for SA was made, implications were not clear for national authorities ; thus, the approach endorsed, but no subsequent actions taken
- ✓ **Lack of advocacy:** HEIs, QA agencies, ENQA, EUA, EURASHE, ESU, EQAR... not pushing EA hard enough



## Slow progress, because of...

### Political reasons

- ✓ **Timing:** not the right time to introduce changes in the national/regional legislation
- ✓ **State language obligations:** unease to switch to English
- ✓ **Power play:** is it that external QA is a national policy instrument for stirring and even controlling higher education, much more than enhancement and transparency tool?

## Slow progress, because of...

### Lack of trust

- ✓ **In HEIs as capable taking care of quality by themselves:**
  - Initial stage of maturity of internal QA
  - a mismatch of an image that JPs are cases of excellence, while reality on the ground is more diverse, as external review reports reveal
  - Commercial orientation and marketisation
- ✓ **In QA agencies:** professional integrity; lack of contextual knowledge and consideration

**Have fruitful discussions –  
We are here to come up with  
solutions!**