

Introduction ESG to the Slovak HEI system

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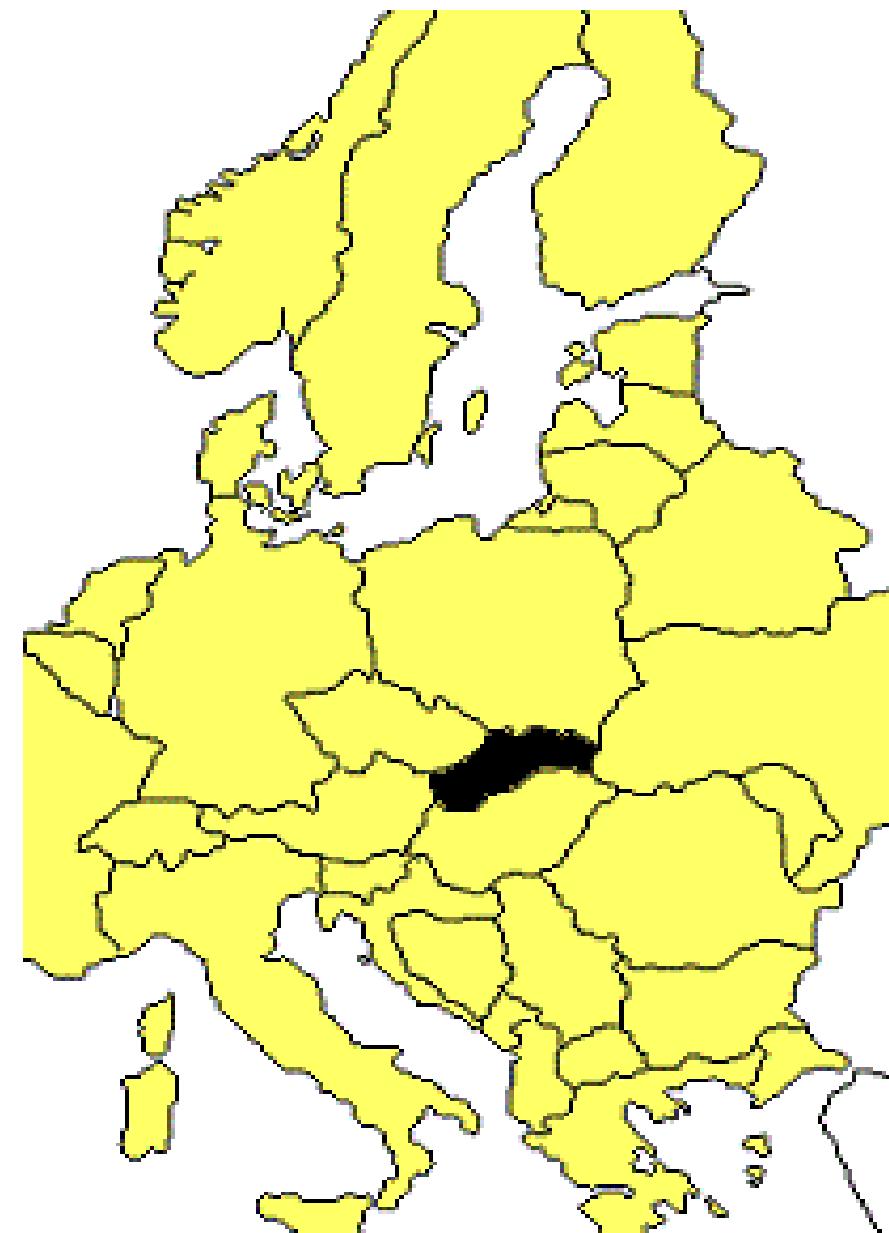
**STAR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
ESG: GUIDELINES FOR UNIVERSITIES AND QUALITY
ASSURANCE AGENCIES IN ACHIEVING THEIR GOALS**

Agenda

1. Slovakia, new legislation
2. Building the Agency - SAAHE
3. Accreditation Standards = ESG „Criteria“
4. Internal QA
5. External QA – Initial Institutional Accreditation/Study Program
6. SEQA – ESG project
7. ENQA Agency Review

1. Slovakia

- Small country in central Europe
- 5.4 mil inhabitants
- Very open economy
- Highly industrial: 1,2 mil. cars/year
- 33 Higher Education Institutions
(20 public, 3 state, 10 private)
- Large brain drain



Background: New legislation

- In the past: the ENQA Agency Review in 2013 – „noncompliant with ESG“
- Issues like **independence**, static review panels, lags of internal quality assurance...
- Preparation of **new legislation: New Agency and processes**
- Participation of HEI stakeholders during the adoption of the legislation
- Main issue for negotiation was the „ownership“ of the agency – the governing body and the nomination principles

2. Building the New Agency: SAAHE

- New legislation since November 2019
- Strong stakeholders influence on governance board
- Agreed composition of the executive board – stakeholders nominees
 - Slovak rectors Conference
 - Council of Higher Education Institution
 - Student Council of Higher Education Institution
 - Employment Associations
- Since March 2020 main agency bricks were built
- Preparation of standards for internal QA system for HEIs

3. Preparation of Accreditation Standards = ESG „criteria“

- Accreditation Standards (norms) are requirements for accreditation
 - For internal HEI QA systems Customized ESG Pt. I adopted to Slovak Circumstances
 - For study programs
- All stakeholders involved in preparation and consultation
- Public comment procedure (1200 comments, 80 % accepted/partially)
- Issued in 2020
- Two years for HEIs for accommodation – to comply with standards and the law

4. Internal QA Systems (in HEIs)

- The HEIs had many components of the IQA on board, but systemic approach was missing
- The law pushed HEIs to implement IQA in systemic way
- SAAHE is the authority for issue the IQA standards as well as make EQA assessments and decisions
- HEIs introduced the policies, structures and processes for IQA
- HEIs implement the IQA and revised the study programs

5. External Quality Assurance (= Accreditations)

- HEIs should apply for the institutional accreditation every 6 years
- This is process compliant with the ESG pt. II
 - If positive: EQA results in **right of HEI for approval and introduction of new study program** in field and cycle
 - If negative (= some gaps identified): imposed corrective measures to HEI
- Now all 33 HEIs undergo EQA,
results planned form the end of the year

6. SEQA – ESG project

- Project to support the six agencies to approach ESG
- SAAHE took part
- We put the most difficult issues on the desk
 - The independent reviewers in small country, selection, reviewers training
- The project offered seminars on the most difficult issues

7. ENQA Agency Reviews of SAAHE

- Based on self-evaluation report, application
- The review panel on-site visit was in March 2023
- They review 52 persons in 17 meetings
- We wait for the Review Report to be published soon

What next for SAAHE?

- Collecting the feed back and evaluation
- The ENQA Agency Review Report
- Improve the processes

Thank you

Robert Redhammer, SAAHE