

# Support to strengthening the higher education system in Azerbaijan



Twinning project ENI/2018/395-401

## Mission Report

Short-Term Mission on Activity 3.7 Undertake a mock accreditation at each pilot university for a study programme in a priority area

(November 25-29, 2019)

### 1. Name and Function of the Expert:

Full name of expert

**Ms. Ineta Helmane, Latvia**

Signature

Full name of expert

**Ms. Ilva Grigorjeva, Latvia**

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 3.7.3 Undertake a mock accreditation at each pilot university for a study programme (Math teacher) in a priority area

Benchmarks for this activity are:

- Minimum 3 mock accreditations of study programmes implemented



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### 3. Time schedule of mission:

Date and Time	Activity
Monday, 25 <sup>th</sup> of November October, 2019	Meeting of experts' panel at Accreditation and Nostrification Office.
Tuesday, 26 <sup>th</sup> of November, 2019	Mock evaluation of Math and Informatics Teacher study programme (Baku Engineering University). Evaluation visit included: Meeting with senior employees of the institution or unit; Meeting with self-evaluation group of study program; Meeting with the teaching staff; Meeting with students; Review of students' quarterly and final works (thesis), exam materials ; Meeting with alumni ; Meeting with representatives of employers and visitation of infrastructure.
Wednesday, 27 <sup>th</sup> of November, 2019	Mock evaluation of Math Teacher study programme (Baku State University).  Evaluation visit included: Meeting with senior employees of the institution or unit; Meeting with self-evaluation group of study program; Meeting with the teaching staff; Meeting with students; Review of students' quarterly and final works (thesis), exam materials ; Meeting with alumni ; Meeting with representatives of employers and visitation of infrastructure.
Thursday, 28 <sup>th</sup> of November, 2019	Mock evaluation of Math Teacher study programme (Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University).  Evaluation visit included: Meeting with senior employees of the institution or unit; Meeting with self-evaluation group of study program; Meeting with the teaching staff; Meeting with students; Review of students' quarterly and final works (thesis), exam materials ; Meeting with alumni ; Meeting with representatives of employers and visitation of infrastructure.
Friday, 29 <sup>th</sup> of November, 2019	Meeting of experts' panel at Accreditation and Nostrification Office and report writing.

### 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 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



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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. The second mission under this Activity took place from 29<sup>th</sup> of April to 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 2019. The objective of this mission was to hold meetings with the HEIs representatives involved in the SER writing and to support them in this process. The deadline for the submission of final draft of self-evaluation reports was set for the end of August 2019. The current mission which is being implemented under the Activity 3.7 aims to conduct the mock evaluation of the programmes in Math teacher in three pilot universities based on the final drafts of self-evaluation reports already submitted.

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

Planned action was achieved. Three mock-evaluations of the study programme of Math and Informatics Teacher in Baku Engineering University (hereafter - BEU) and study programme of Math Teacher in two universities: Baku State University (hereafter - BSU) and Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University (hereafter - ASPU).

## **6. Unexpected Results**

Not applicable

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

The Handbook On Methodologies and Requirements for study Programmes Evaluation should be fulfilled and finished.

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

Recommendations to ANO:

1. It is recommended to select expert panel one month before site visit (one week before the site visit is not enough). Also, all experts should receive all documentation which is necessary for the assessment procedure, including self – assessment reports, agenda for the site visits etc. It is recommended to create a dropbox folder for collection and access of all necessary documents and information.
2. It is recommended to follow the Handbook On Methodologies and Requirements for study Programmes Evaluation, more carefully. Example, for the first expert meeting make a presentation from ANO side. Presentations should include questions like:
  - a. short introduction in national education system, main information which can help experts to better understand background of universities and students;
  - b. short information regarding state requirements and standards, laws for study programs under assessment (could also include information on credit points, enrolment criteria etc.);
  - c. information about procedure (including the steps which are already finished);
  - d. information on requirements of experts and expert's tasks;
  - e. information about ethical principles which should be used during assessment procedure;
  - f. Information on expert report writing;
  - g. any other relevant information.



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3. The Handbook On Methodologies and Requirements for study programmes Evaluation holds the ANO interpretation for ethical principles, but, during the site visit it was observed, that those principles are followed only partly. Before the sit visit ANO should explain ethical principles more clearly.
4. Before submitting Universities self- assessment report to experts, ANO should check information witch university's included in their self-assessment reports and appendixes. The documents produced by the universities should be consistent with the guidelines for self- assessment reports and include data according to the indicators, which experts should take into account when preparing the expert report.
5. Before the site visit to universities, it is recommended to make sure that each meeting consist relevant participates, for example, in the meeting with labor market should participate representatives who employs graduates from particular study programme. The group of participates should be selected according to the diversity, for example whit different gender, age, experience etc.
6. ANO should provide an environment where meetings are not disturbed by the entry of people who are not scheduled to attend meetings. This is an important prerequisite for creating a safe environment for interviewees.
7. Before the site visit, ANO should make sure that Universities are ready for site visit and do not have additional questions regarding the practical issues.
8. An important prerequisite for productive teamwork is that all team members can communicate in English.
9. Indicators for study proramme evaluation and accreditation in Azerbaijan should be reviewed. It is important to understand the purpose of all indicators which is asked from the Universities.
10. In the case that the report of the expert group is written only by part of the team, the report should be signed only by the expert who wrote it. Other experts may sign separately for participation in site visits to universities.

## **9. Acknowledgments (if any)**

The experts would like to extend their appreciation for the support provided by the ANO, and the head Mrs. Lala Abasova, and especially to the coordinator Mr.Tofiq Mustafayev, who liaisoned with the universities and arranged all the meetings, to Mr. Tarlan Arzumanov for his impeccable translation, to Mrs. Aytaj Ataishiyeva for timely communication, and to Mrs. Lisa Bydanova for overall support during this exercise.

## **Annexes**

Not applicable



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