
International Accreditations

best practices

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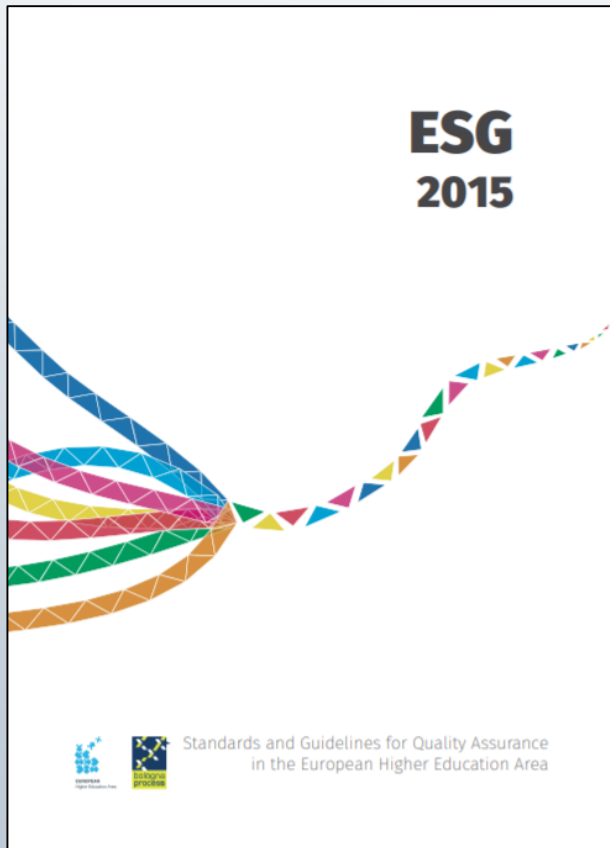
HEAD OF QUALITY AGENCY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, LATVIA

ACADEMIC INFORMATION CENTRE

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European Quality Assurance Framework

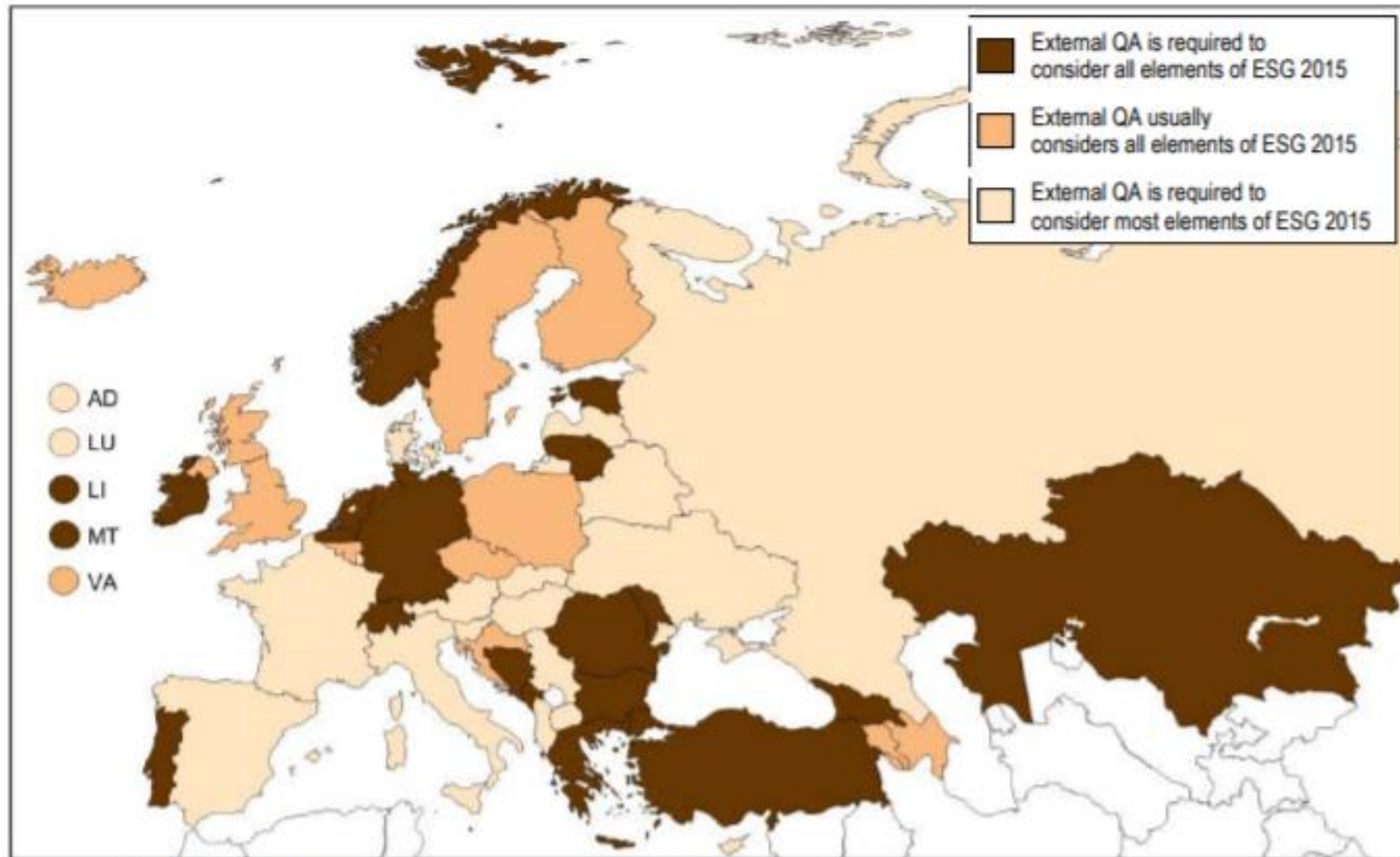


- ✓ Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2015):
 - Standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance
 - Standards and guidelines for external quality assurance
 - Standards and guidelines for quality assurance agencies

- ✓ National legislation, policy priorities, organisational normatives

The fundamental responsibility for quality lies within the higher education institutions. **Internal quality assurance is a duty of the institutions**, and the development of an effective “quality culture” is clearly linked with their degree of operational autonomy.

Figure 4.4: Requirements for external quality assurance to consider the elements specified in the ESG 2015, 2016/17



Source: BFUG data collection.

Quality Assurance tendencies

- Evaluation at the level of higher education institutions
- Evaluation at programme level
- Combination of both institutional and programme level

8 systems reported that their quality assurance is based on institutional level evaluation only

20 combine institutional and programme-level evaluation.

In 22 systems, all programmes are subject to external quality assurance procedures.

Latvia: Quality Assessment procedures

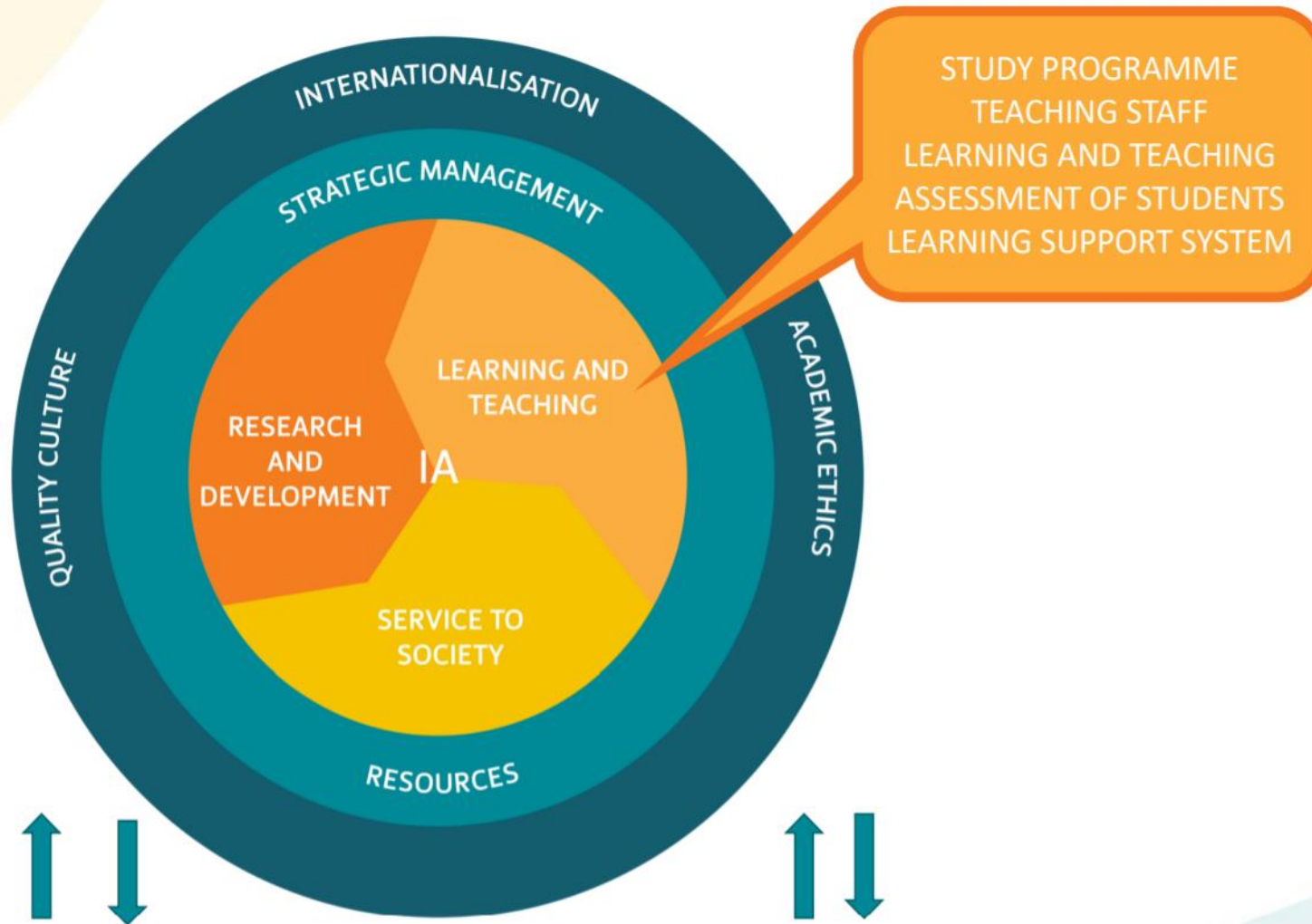
➤ **Licensing of a study programme** – non-cyclical procedure for each new study programme

➤ **Accreditation of a study direction** – cyclical procedure for a study field in each HEI, every 2 or 6 years (since 2012)

All study programmes are grouped in 31 study direction (study field)

➤ **Evaluation of a HEI** – currently takes place only once for each HEI, shortly after the HEI has started operating

Estonia



Implementation of standards tested with the chosen study programmes

<https://ekka.archimedes.ee/en/universities/institutional-accreditation/>

Austria - Programme Accreditation

Private Universities	Universities of Applied Sciences
Ex ante – before starting	Ex ante – before starting
Accreditation for 6 years – until the following institutional re-accreditation	Accreditation for an unlimited period

CRITERIA

- (1) degree programme and degree programme management;
- (2) staff;
- (3) quality assurance;
- (4) funding and infrastructure;
- (5) Applied research and development
- (6) National and international co-operation

Norway - example

- Universities are granted the right to accredit or recognize study programmes themselves
- Quality assurance audits every 6 year
- Non-accredited University colleges must accredit all new programmes
- New master's and doctoral programmes must be accredited

External Experts



Experts selection

- ✓ Defined criteria/ guidelines for including experts in the database and for selecting them for assessment procedures
- ✓ Two types of trainings:
 - Annual training (on general QA related topics)
 - Specific training before each assessment procedure

Composition of experts group

Academic community

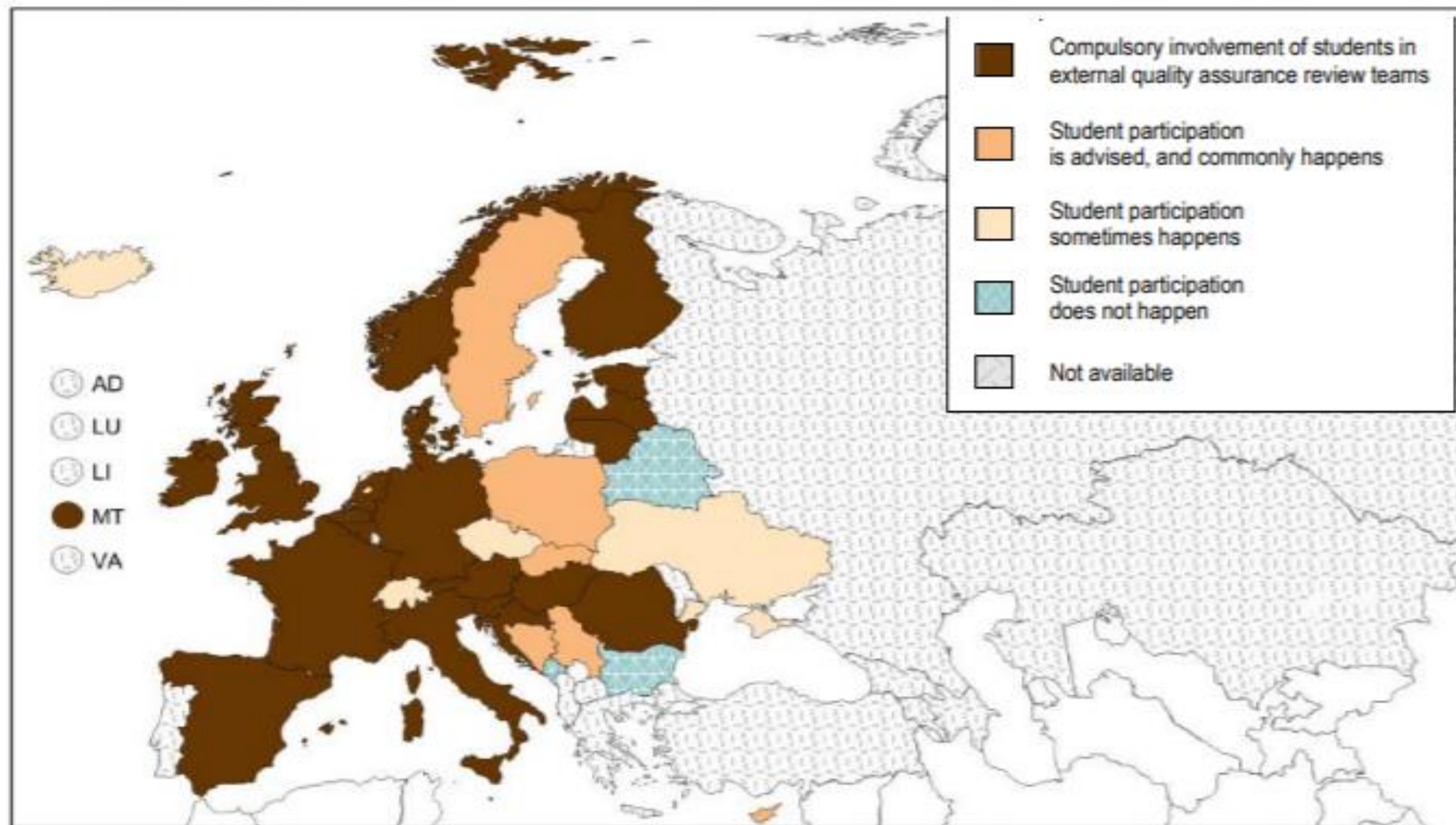
Students

Employers

International experts

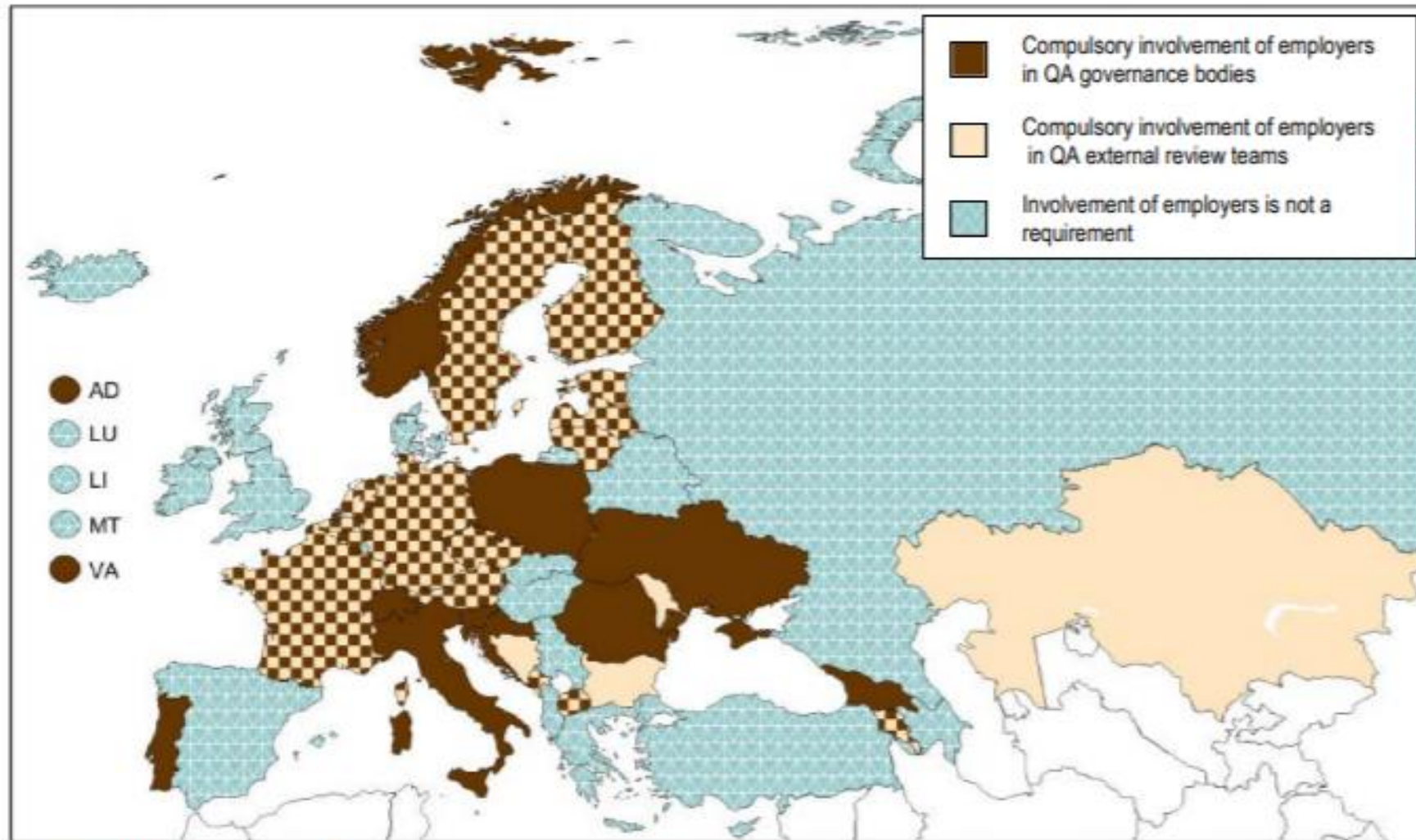
- QA experience
- Teaching experience
- Management experience

Figure 4.5: European Student Unions perception of student participation in external quality assurance, 2016/17



Source: ESU data collection.

Figure 4.7: Required involvement of employers in quality assurance governance bodies and external review teams, 2016/17



Source: BFUG data collection.

Challenges and recommendations

Periodical review of programmes

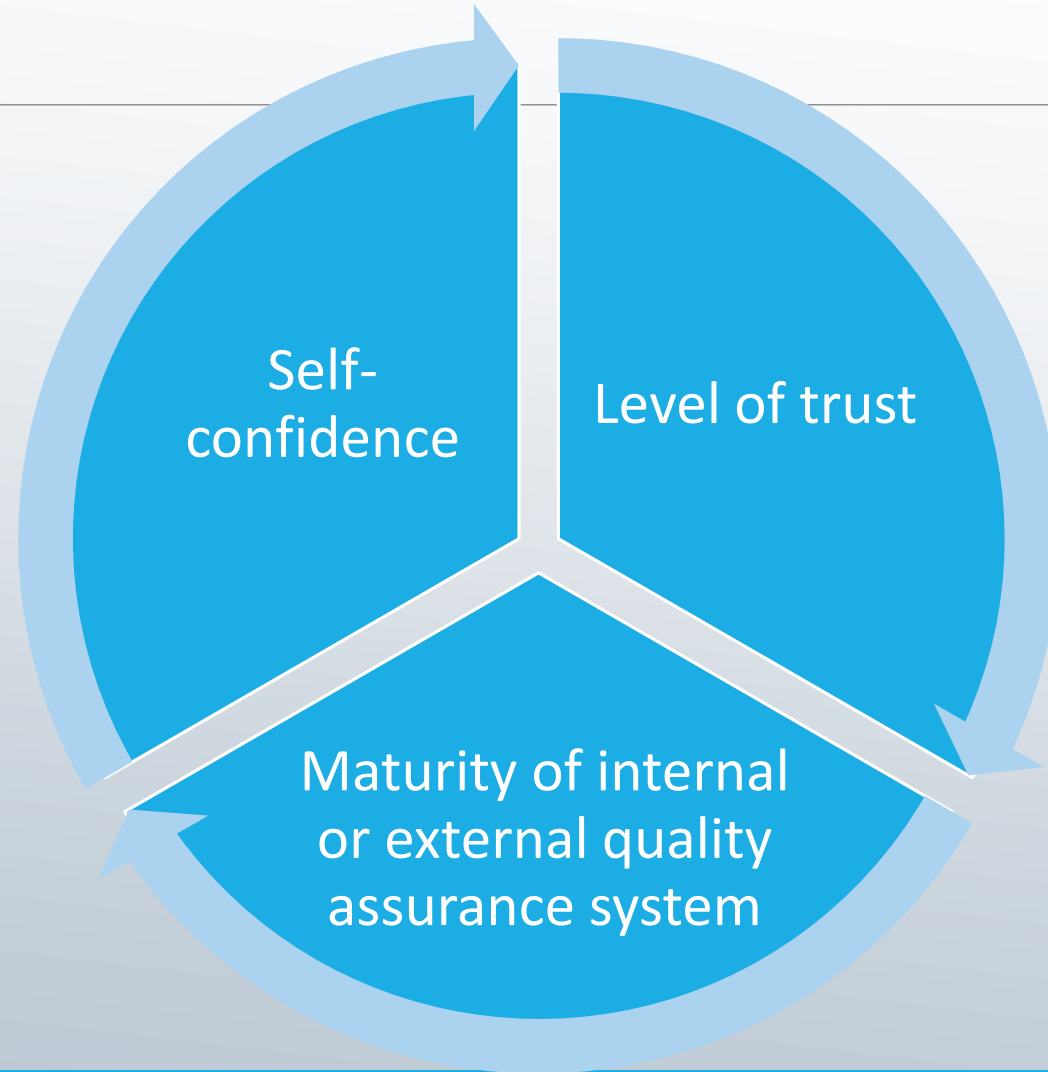
To be considered:

- ✓ How often
- ✓ What kind of procedure
- ✓ Relation to on-going monitoring
- ✓ Adapt to the needs and goals of the institution
- ✓ External and/or international input
- ✓ Follow-up procedures



FIT-for-PURPOSE

Three key factors influencing design of quality assurance system



Keep in mind:

- ✓ QA processes should be fit for purpose
- ✓ Design of external quality assurance processes depends on the stage of the development of internal quality assurance system, specific needs of HEIs and goals which should be achieved
- ✓ Balance between accountability and enhancement
- ✓ Define the scope
- ✓ Design a system that is effective and credible
- ✓ International experience is useful, but should be incorporated into the specific national context

Design a system that makes sense in your context!

Questions?
Thank you!

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