

Evaluations of ten higher education institutions in Montenegro

Cross-cutting summary report

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1. Introduction

This report is based upon the evaluations of ten higher education institutions in Montenegro. The evaluations took place in the framework of the project “Higher Education and Research for Innovation and Competitiveness” (HERIC), implemented by the government of Montenegro with the overall objective to strengthen the quality and relevance of higher education and research in Montenegro.

The evaluations were carried out by the Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP), an independent service of the European University Association (EUA). IEP is a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and is listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

Each institution was assessed by an independent IEP team, using the IEP methodology as described in the Annex. Table 1 provides a brief overview of the participating institutions, including the city in which they are located.

Table 1: The 10 institutions

Name	Type	Status	Students
<i>Bar</i>			
Faculty of Business Economy	Faculty	Private	190
Faculty of Business Management	Faculty	Private	442
<i>Berane</i>			
Faculty for Traffic, Communication and Logistics	Faculty	Private	168
<i>Budva</i>			
Faculty of Business and Tourism	Faculty	Private	165
<i>Herceg Novi</i>			
Faculty of Management	Faculty	Private	310
<i>Podgorica</i>			
University of Donja Gorica	University	Private	1600
University “Mediterranean”	University	Private	1375
University of Montenegro	University	Public	20,229
Faculty of Administrative and European Studies	Faculty	Private	120

<i>Tivat</i>			
Faculty of Mediterranean Business Studies	Faculty	Private	328

The ten participating institutions formed the higher education sector in Montenegro.¹ Together, they enrol about 25,000 students. The institutions include the University of Montenegro (20,229 students), two other universities that enrol 1600 and 1375 students respectively, and seven faculties that enrol between 120 and 442 students.

Five of the seven faculties specialise in some form of business administration studies. Apart from the University of Montenegro, all institutions are private.

The University of Montenegro was established in 1974 through the merger of a number of pre-existing independent faculties, colleges and research institutes. The seven private faculties are very new, having been created between 2005 and 2012.

As Table 1 shows, there is a high concentration of institutions in the capital Podgorica and in the cities on the coast. However, the University of Montenegro has a number of satellite campuses spread through the country and one of the private faculties is located in the interior (Berane) albeit with a modest enrolment of fewer than 200 students.

This report identifies shared issues and challenges across the sector. It concentrates on the areas that are the foci of IEP: governance, strategic planning and internal quality assurance; achieving the institutions' missions in learning and teaching, research, and service to society; and internationalisation. In addition, IEP was asked to provide an analysis of the following aspects:

- The three cycle system, which includes a three-year undergraduate degree, two years of graduate studies (one year specialist and one year master) and three years of doctoral studies;
- The student-to-staff ratio;
- The integration of practical work (internships) in both academic and professional study programmes;
- The quality of doctoral studies, including the organisational aspects.

The first three aspects are discussed as part of chapter three on teaching and learning, while the fourth is part of chapter four on research.

¹ Three new institutions were established in 2013-2014, after the evaluation project was already agreed. They are the Faculty for International Management in Tourism and Hotel Industry, in Milocer, established in 2013; the Maritime Faculty in Bar, established in 2013; and the Faculty for Montenegrin language and literature in Cetinje, established in 2014.

2. Governance and institutional decision making

2.1. Governance structure

According to the law of 2003 on higher education, Montenegrin higher education institutions must be governed by an executive governing board, dealing with management and economic issues; a senate, dealing with academic affairs; and an executive head (dean or rector) responsible for the daily management. For private institutions, the founders or owners can also play a role in determining the overall strategic direction of the institution.

Formally, this governance structure seems unproblematic and workable for the higher education institutions in Montenegro. However, various issues arise in both the very small, private institutions and at the much larger, public University of Montenegro.

2.1.1. Governance of the smaller institutions

In the smaller institutions, formal governance structures are rather weak and personal instead of institutional and professional. Moreover, the executive head was at times also a founder of the institution, which made the leadership style even more ad-hoc and personalised rather than based on stable structures and a common institutional culture. Evidently, the law does not require a clear separation of the founders from the daily management and governance of the institution, to a point where, in one institution, the founders (in practice the dean and the mother and daughter of a deceased co-founder) appointed the majority of the governing board, which was chaired by the dean/owner. To complicate things further, this particular founder/dean/owner resided abroad. While this might have been the most extreme case among the evaluated institutions, it is clear that many of the small institutions are *de facto* governed through a personalised, charismatic leadership model rather than a professional, institutional one. To give an example from another institution:

The university grew quickly under the leadership of a charismatic rector who is also one of [the] founders. While he concentrates power and works with a small circle of staff, he is also keen to engage in a democratic dialogue across the institution. ...

[The university] is often described as a family, with the rector as the father figure; the family metaphor seems to explain and fit many aspects of life at the university. Thus, when academic staff speak about the university, it is rare that they spontaneously mention the formal university or faculty bodies. Instead, they will mention face-to-face contact with the rector or their dean and with colleagues during the round table discussions that are organised occasionally to discuss important issues.

Regardless of whether the personalised and often *ad hoc* leadership style is effective, it does not present a sustainable governance model. To an extent, this personal leadership style is a consequence of the young age and small size of these institutions; time should bring a

process of institutional maturation, provided that attention is paid to fostering professionalism and institutionalisation of decision-making processes.

2.1.2. Governance of the University of Montenegro

At the University of Montenegro, there is clearly critical mass to enable a more professional and institutionalised form of leadership. However, the university suffers from the tradition of independent faculties, which is common to universities in the region. There is little institutional consensus about the respective rights and responsibilities of the faculties and the central management, with the result that the governing board and the senate seem more like a gathering of individual faculties than the strategic bodies of a united institution. The large number of faculties does not improve this situation. Here, it would be advisable to strengthen the central role of the executive senior leadership team (rector and vice rectors) by assigning them clear responsibilities and sufficient authority to implement policies and to enable a more coherent governance of the institution as a whole.

2.1.3. Student involvement in governance

Opportunities for student involvement in governance were generally good, and many evaluation reports praised institutions for this. However, students did not always show a high level of engagement in the actual governance. This could be due to the *ad hoc* nature of actual decision making in many institutions. It is also likely that because the smaller institutions have a very limited number of students, it is difficult to find enough persons willing and able to engage in institutional governance.

2.1.4. Impact of governance on strategic capacity

Although the two types of institutions (public and private) face different challenges in governance, the result is a common lack of strategic capacity. Neither the *ad hoc* personal leadership style nor the decentralised model of quasi-independent faculties enable Montenegrin higher education institutions to articulate and, importantly, to implement long-term strategies.

Some of the smaller institutions were founded in order to fulfil specific missions, which is a laudable trait and a good argument to have such small, specialised institutions. Examples of these missions include promoting new types of learning and teaching, regional development or preparing graduates (and thus Montenegro) for European integration. It was, however, a common theme in the evaluation reports that institutions do not have realistic plans to implement and realise their goals. As a rule, institutional strategies are limited to statements of aspirational goals with no consideration of how the institution would actually reach them. There are examples of quite elaborate strategies based on externally funded projects, however, even these have no or very rudimentary implementation plans. There is little evidence of concrete deadlines, responsibilities or actual measurable objectives.

Moreover, there is some indication of an insufficient consideration of risks. For private universities, which are wholly dependent on student fees, there is little evidence of contingency plans, should this income diminish. Also, many institutions harbour assumptions about immediate positive developments such as Montenegro developing into a sailing and tourist hub for the Adriatic or accession of Montenegro to the European Union in the near future. Though higher institutions do well to anticipate and even facilitate such developments, there is a need not only to “hope for the best”, but also to “plan for the worst”.

It is highly recommended that there is a professionalisation and institutionalisation of governance in the higher education institutions, including the professionalisation of administrative staff. This should heighten the strategic capacity of institutions to the point where they are able to develop sound and realistic plans for the implementation of strategies using available models such as SMART (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound). Addressing a large number of the challenges mentioned in this report would need such professionalised governance in order to implement the necessary changes.

At the system level, this professionalisation could be facilitated by moving towards more institutional autonomy in the medium-long term, as institutions demonstrate that they have built appropriate governance structures. Such autonomy would be associated with the appropriate accountability directed at evaluating the institutions’ ability to set up sustainable procedures to ensure proper governance. At the moment, the Council of Higher Education (CHE), the body responsible for quality assurance in Montenegro, has criteria meant to hold the institutions accountable for “strategic planning, setting principles and priorities”.² It could be advisable to review if this accreditation requirement is being applied rigorously.

In summary, the Montenegrin higher education sector could develop a realistic step-by-step roadmap towards real implementation of autonomy with accountability, giving more autonomy to higher education institutions, but at the same time setting high standards for their governance.

Recommendation N° 1: National authorities should support the improvement of governance structures in institutions by:

- Including standards for good governance in the external quality assurance system.
- Implementing the principle of “autonomy with accountability” that the CHE promotes in its self-evaluation guidelines, and holding higher education institutions accountable for their strategic planning.
- In the long term, increasing university autonomy while applying high governance standards.

Recommendation N° 2: Institutions need to professionalise and institutionalise their

² Standards and form of the self-evaluation report, 1.2. Statement of autonomy with accountability.

governance structures by:

- Building strategic capacity to implement and realise institutional missions. This should be done by assigning clear objectives, deadlines and responsibilities in a professional manner.
- Creating appropriate organisational cultures:
 - For private institutions, the organisational cultures must be related to the institutional mission rather than the personality of the founder, dean or rector, and the founders and investors should keep at arms' length from academic decisions-making processes.
 - For the institutions with multiple faculties, there is a need to go beyond traditional allegiance to individual faculties, and instead to reinforce a sense of institution-wide affiliation and envisage the future of the institution as a whole.

2.2. Financial aspects

Montenegrin higher education institutions are mostly financed through student fees and, to a much lesser extent, through income from external consultancy services. The University of Montenegro also receives state funding in addition to income from student fees and from external sources. Accountancy practices seem to vary, corresponding to the overall weak governance and management capacity of institutions. As stated above, evaluation teams found that many institutions were highly exposed to economic trends in light of the almost exclusive dependence on student fees, particularly as non-payment was an issue in some institutions. Moreover, five different faculties operate in the coastal region, offering very similar programmes thus competing for the same students. In addition, given that the University of Montenegro is a comprehensive university, this gave little room for the other institutions to focus on niche disciplines. None of the institutions could rely on incoming international students to compensate for fluctuations in Montenegrin student numbers, because the number of incoming international students is very low, and the capacity of institutions to receive them is insufficiently developed (cf. chapter six on internationalisation). Due to the low strategic capacity of the institutions, these risks did not seem to be assessed and taken into account in their medium- and long-term planning. In some cases, this leads to financial dependence on the owners of private institutions. It would also seem that some institutions take an overly simplistic approach to these issues by either overvaluing positive trends or, in one institution with rapidly falling student numbers, attributing negative trends to “unfair competition”.

Public funding of higher education institutions is low. Despite an enrolment rate of more than 50%,³ Montenegro spent only 0.59% of GDP on higher education in 2012, down from 0.87% in 2009⁴ and much below the EU average of 1.27%.⁵ This discrepancy between enrolment and spending should be addressed. Most of this funding goes to the University of Montenegro, apart from some indirect funding to private universities through state scholarships. At the University of Montenegro, funding is distributed according to a collective agreement with the government and trade unions; this agreement allocates funding on the basis of teaching activities. As this funding is rather low, there is a perverse incentive for the university and for individual faculties to admit fee-paying students to make up for the lack of direct state funding, which can be detrimental to staff-student ratios. In addition, the funding model does not take into account maintenance and infrastructure or funding for research activities. The strong link between teaching and funding (government funding or fees) makes it very difficult for any university in Montenegro to fulfil its research mission.

There are some sources of external funding, mostly through competitive funding for research and consultancy work for the private sector. However, even in the faculties that succeed in attracting this type of funding, there is no continuous, sustainable income from these sources. Furthermore, if Montenegrin higher education institutions were able to attract considerable external funding for research, there is no full costing methodology in place to determine realistically the level of co-funding (of for instance EU funding), which could be quite considerable in the case of large research projects.

Recommendation N° 3: The development of higher education and research in Montenegro requires national authorities to consider:

- Increasing public investments to reach (at least) a comparable level with the neighbouring countries and, in the longer term, with the EU average.
- Allocating sustainable funding to support the research activities of the public and private research-active institutions and developing the necessary infrastructure.
- Abolishing or reforming the collective agreement as a funding allocation method.

Recommendation N° 4: Institutions should:

- In the short term, improve their financial management, including risk management.
- In the medium term, build capacity to attract external funding through consultancies

³ Salmi, Jamil (2013), *Appropriate funding mechanisms for the development of higher education in Montenegro*, p. 4.

⁴ Ibid. p. 9.

⁵ Eurostat, Education and training.

or competitive research funding.

- In the long term, apply full costing of activities.

2.3. Human resources

Staff at Montenegrin higher education institutions is mostly or wholly engaged in teaching activities. Many teams found that staff members were enthusiastic and eager to deliver good teaching and improve their institutions. The human resources might be the biggest asset of higher education in Montenegro and should be developed as such. It was noted, however, that promotion procedures are based on research output rather than teaching skills, even though most institutions do not undertake research in any significant manner. Given the very high enrolment rate in Montenegro (more than half of each cohort is trained at higher education level) and teaching being by far the dominant activity of higher education institutions, it would be advisable to invest in the teaching capacity of academic staff and reflect the importance of teaching skills in the promotion procedure.

As will be described in chapter three on teaching and learning, many institutions use part-time staff from Montenegro or from abroad, mostly from Serbia. In some institutions, there is an imbalance between full-time and part-time teaching staff, which is detrimental to the learning environment since many teachers are not available for long periods.

There seems to be a lack of basic human resource management, corresponding to the overall weak management capacity. It was impossible for many of the IEP teams to obtain data on staff calculated on the basis of full-time equivalent, and staff training is at best rudimentary, or wholly dependent on the initiative of individual team leaders.

Systematic training of administrative staff is fully absent. In order to fulfil their core missions, the institutions should develop the capacity of their administrative staff particularly in order to improve their ability to engage in research collaborations (cf. chapter four on research) and with society (cf. chapter five on service to society).

Where internal quality assurance systems are in place, they do not include the quality of administrative functions, but are focussed on teaching (cf. section 2.4 for further details).

Recommendation N° 5: Higher education institutions should develop their human resources further:

- Human resource management should be brought up to international standards with the introduction of basic concepts such as full-time equivalent.
- Training and professional development of both academic and administrative staff should be introduced in a systematic manner.

- Teaching merit should feature in academic promotions.

2.4. Quality culture

Quality assurance has been promoted as a key aspect of the European Higher Education Area. European policy discussions focused initially on the development of external quality assurance processes and then shifted to internal quality assurance with the Berlin Communiqué in 2003. In 2005, ministers of higher education adopted the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*⁶ (ESG), which provided further impetus and guidance for the development of both external and internal quality assurance.

Montenegro has an external accreditation process that is administered by the Council of Higher Education (CHE). CHE conducts the accreditation and reaccreditation of study programmes based on threshold standards. A recent analysis has shown that CHE requires further development in order to comply with the ESG.⁷

All institutions were found to have internal quality assurance arrangements in place, albeit at different stages of development. Good examples included one institution that required the senior teaching staff to provide annual feedback on the work of junior teaching staff; the institution also collected statistics on student progression and success rates periodically and administered a yearly survey of incoming students to understand their motivation for choosing the institution and their expectations regarding future employment. Another institution tracked students' destinations three months after graduation and required academics to produce individual annual reports that were submitted to the deans and discussed; it also asked the deans to produce an annual report that went to the rector and the senate.

Student surveys seem widely used across the sector but are focused on teaching rather than also on learning (i.e. on the teacher's performance rather than also asking students to reflect upon their own engagement and commitment to the learning process). A couple of institutions publicise the results of the student evaluations on their website and discuss them in their commission for quality and their student parliament. However, there were scattered observations that, in the bulk of institutions, the response rate for the questionnaires was often low. This may be linked either to the small size of some institutions that allow them to have effective informal feedback mechanisms or to the fact that students do not always know how the results of the questionnaires were used for improvement.

⁶ Cf. http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/ESG_3edition-2.pdf

⁷ cf. Hénard, F. (1 July 2013) *Review of the quality assurance system*, a report commissioned by the Montenegrin Ministry of Education.

Some institutions have a quality assurance working group or commission that has produced operational procedures and rulebooks to frame the quality assurance processes.

Only one institution was praised for the quality and effectiveness of its information system. Nevertheless, its quality assurance system relied on the individual initiative of academic staff rather than on institutional feedback processes. The following quote from its evaluation report describes a situation that is found across the sector:

There was little evidence of systematic, institutional procedures for quality enhancement. Academic staff would engage in quality enhancement – reacting to the student survey – on a purely individual basis, but there is no sign of the institution having a systematic approach on ensuring that staff can develop as teachers and researchers. The quality culture can be described as a “professional culture”, where quality is dependent on the professional attitude of individuals, and the institutional engagement is limited to control and data collection.

The general impression arising from the evaluation reports is that formal quality processes are still new and that they have been developed in response to external requirements, without focusing on the need to institutionalise them while ensuring staff and student ownership.

The lack of ownership of these processes could lead to a tendency to develop quality processes that feel burdensome to staff and students. This not yet the case in the evaluated institutions but it could become a reality very quickly if no attention is paid to embedding a quality culture. Indeed, some of the evaluation reports noted a lack of knowledge about the ESG even when these were referenced in quality manuals. It was also noted that there was a bureaucratic approach to this area, a lack of attention to the concept of quality culture and too little emphasis on improvement.

Nevertheless, embedding a quality culture could be facilitated by the fact that staff members in the small institutions were generally found to be strongly committed to their institutions and in the largest institution quality assurance was seen as “probably the most integrated system of the university. It is used across the institution and best practices are found in the faculties.” These two features can serve as the foundation for embedding an effective institutional quality culture.

Recommendation N° 6: National authorities should support the development of internal quality processes by ensuring that CHE has addressed all three parts of the ESG and support the development of internal quality processes.

Recommendation N° 7: The institutions should:

- Develop quality assurance further by using Part 1 of the ESG as a guide.
- Pay careful attention to the development of a quality culture by entrusting

administrative and academic staff (including part-time staff) and students with responsibilities for monitoring quality and by communicating how the results feed into institutional planning and improvement.

- Consider appointing a vice-dean or vice-rector with responsibility for quality assurance who would play an important role in the future development of the institutions' quality system. This senior officer should be supported by a qualified staff member who is capable of analysing the results of evaluations and other data, monitoring activities and supporting academic units in enhancing the quality of their work.
- Improve student feedback by a) including questions on the learning process and allowing some modification of questionnaires for individual disciplines; b) evaluating the learning environment (e.g. library, registrar functions, student support services, etc.); c) exploring alternative models of collecting feedback (e.g. student focus groups); d) informing students about the use of the results; e) establishing alumni tracking mechanisms.
- Extend quality assurance systems to encompass research activities and non-academic functions such as the administrative units.

3. Teaching and learning

This chapter examines teaching and learning at the Bachelor and Master levels⁸ and focuses on three areas that were of particular relevance to this evaluation project: the three-cycle degree system, the practical preparation of students for the workplace and the student-to-staff ratio. These aspects are discussed within the broader context of the Bologna reform process, particularly the shift to student-centred teaching and the focus on student employability and attainment.

3.1. The three-cycle system and the shift to student-centred learning

Almost all evaluated institutions have put in place the first two cycles of the three-cycle system (i.e. Bachelor and Master levels). The exceptions include 1) the newest faculty, which delivers only Bachelor level programmes for now, and 2) the three universities, which offer a limited number of doctoral programmes, although some of the other institutions are interested in doing so in the future. The other two important Bologna tools, ECTS and the diploma supplement, are used in all institutions.

The three-cycle system conforms to the Bologna Process, apart from the fact that a specialist postgraduate qualification is awarded at the end of the first year of the Master's studies. The specialist license is a holdover from the former Yugoslavia when it was offered as a parallel track to the academic Master's degree and students had to select one or the other. Today, students progress from a one-year specialist postgraduate qualification to a one-year Master's programme.

The specialist qualification is reported to be favoured by employers who do not trust that the new three-year Bachelor's degree offers sufficient preparation for employment. Further investigation by one IEP team revealed that (1) there were signs that private sector employers would possibly be satisfied with the three-year Bachelor graduates provided that their education included some practical experience and the development of "soft skills" and (2) that public service employers seemed more hesitant about the three-year Bachelor's degree. Several evaluation reports recommended stronger involvement of employers in curriculum development; such a dialogue could reveal more about employers' opinions of the current degrees and might enable the move to a Bologna-compliant system.

The existence of the specialist degree does not conform to the Bologna three-cycle degree system. Its continuance means that the system in Montenegro is either 4+1 or 3+1+1 but it is not clear which. In either case, it may mean that the two postgraduate years are not planned as whole.

Thus, an evaluation report noted: "The implementation of the three cycles has not led to a comprehensive rethinking of curricula, but rather there were examples of re-organisation of

⁸ The doctoral level is analysed in chapter four, on research.

existing structures into sometimes shorter time frames.” The superficial implementation of the Bologna reforms, notably ECTS, encouraged students in one institution to

... “hunt(ing) for credits” by taking courses with a view to attain more credits rather than selecting courses for their actual content and relevance for their study as a whole. This occasionally meant that although basic skills were missing, students would nevertheless pass as they had the sufficient number of credits.

An important aspect of the Bologna reform is the shift to student-centred learning and to a learning outcome approach. Both are in evidence in Montenegro but in emerging ways. Thus, the leadership in many institutions is aware of the need to shift to more active ways of learning and has supported the creation of some modules but lack of staff development, dependence on guest lecturers and part-time teachers, and limited financial resources were reported to hinder the generalisation of this approach across the institutions. Therefore, the reliance on lectures predominates.

Learning outcomes have been identified at some of the smaller institutions for both the programmes and the individual courses, and a variety of assessment methods are used. However, the majority of Montenegrin students still study without clear learning outcomes having been defined. Moreover, learning outcomes are not always well understood by students and the flexibility of learning paths through the choice of electives is limited.

In brief, as one report stated “it does not appear that Bologna principles in areas such as curriculum design and a learning-outcome approach are fully addressed and embedded”.⁹

Recommendation N° 8: National authorities should re-examine the existence of the specialist qualification and bring Montenegro in line with European developments, particularly through a national qualifications framework that is compatible with the European one. This would also require rethinking the public administration career ladder and communicating effectively with private sector employers on the new degrees.

Recommendation N° 9: Institutions should pursue their efforts to implement the Bologna reforms by:

- Ensuring that the curricula are redesigned to fit the Bologna three-cycle degree structure rather than the current hybrid structure.
- Ensuring that learning outcomes are identified for each study programme and course, that these are aligned with assessment strategies and that students and the wider public understand the learning-outcome approach. This understanding could be

⁹ For a very useful publication addressing how to implement and assess learning outcomes, cf. Kennedy Declan (2007), *Writing and Using Learning Outcomes: A Practical Guide*, University College Cork, Ireland. A shortened version of the book was published as an article: Kennedy D., Hyland A. and Ryan N. (2006), *Writing and using Learning Outcomes*, *EUA Bologna Handbook*, C 3.4-1, 1-30, Berlin: Raabe Verlag, <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/qf/resources.asp>

promoted by including students on curricular committees and requiring that all syllabi list the learning objectives of the courses and that all teachers introduce their courses by explaining these.

- Promoting examples of good and innovative practices in the area of student-centred learning (e.g. interactive learning, use of case-studies, problem-based learning, etc.) through periodic events directed at the academic staff, and focusing particularly on part-time faculty members who come from the professions and may not be as familiar with European higher education developments.
- Allowing individual learning paths by increasing the number of elective courses.

3.2. The integration of practical work and student employability

There is strong evidence that the institutions are concerned about preparing their graduates to enter the labour market. This is particularly the case in the faculties that are professionally orientated and whose students mentioned that they were attracted to the practical orientation of the course offer.

Preparation of undergraduates for the job market includes periods of internships in companies, the promotion of extracurricular activities, hiring part-time teaching staff who hold professional employment in the private and public sectors; bringing in employers as guest lecturers; consulting external bodies and stakeholders in curricular design; etc.

Internships usually last two to three months and require the hosting organisations to provide some form of confirmation that the internship has been completed. One institution was specifically praised for its semester-long internship for which students were prepared in the preceding semester by two mentors (academic and professional) and which was finished with an academic paper based on the internship experience. At the other end of the spectrum, the practical part of the curriculum in another institution corresponded to a modest number of three ECTS. For the most part, internships are unstructured and not formally evaluated and, as had been discussed above (section 3.1), a learning-outcome approach is not yet fully developed. In addition, in some cases, students have to search for internship opportunities themselves and do not clearly distinguish the differences between a random work placement and an internship that is integrated in their curriculum.

One institution has developed a suite of innovative courses over the three years of the Bachelor; these courses emphasised soft skills' development through active learning but received no ECTS although they were documented in the diploma supplements issued to students. The rationale for not giving ECTS to these courses was that they were too innovative to be accepted as academically sound by Montenegrin society.

Resistance to innovative content was also mentioned in relation to reported difficulties in accrediting interdisciplinary courses. This reflects the lack of discussion about skills requirement and the rarity of problem-based learning methods in Montenegro.

Recommendation N° 10: National authorities should ensure that ECTS is attached to all required work and that the accreditation approach does not prevent the development of innovative curricula.

Recommendation N° 11: The institutions should:

- Ensure a better integration of internships by:
 - Providing the interns and the organisations hosting them with a clear statement of the intended learning outcomes of such internships and the criteria by which to evaluate if these outcomes have been achieved.
 - Assisting students in finding internships that are related to their area of study and require a minimum of two months for internships.
 - Assessing what students have learned through the internships.
- Assign ECTS to all required work, whether it is an internship or an innovative class.
- Showcase the results of students' work, particularly those with the best potential for practical application, in order to convey to future employers and to the students themselves the skills that have been developed.

3.3. The student-to-staff ratio and student attainment

Determining the student-to-staff ratio proved to be a challenge. In order to do so accurately, it requires knowing the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff and students but institutions did not seem to be used to calculating staff and student numbers in this way. The ratios provided were approximate and ranged between 1:16 and 1:8.3. One institution counted teaching assistants (i.e. doctoral candidates) as part of its staff, which led to a ratio of 1:10. Recalculating without the teaching assistants resulted in a ratio of 1:25.

An issue that surprised the IEP teams was the category of “inactive” students, which is a holdover from former Yugoslavia. The following extracts from two reports illustrate the issues that this practice raised:

... in accordance with statutory regulation, the status of an “inactive” student applies to pregnancy, hospitalisation, period of enrolment abroad, or special personal reasons. Decisions on such cases, which include the last category, are made by the dean and, if vindicated, may be lifelong. In noting this regulatory situation, the team observed that, should a study programme be discontinued, or

undergo major change, then it is difficult to see how a student who remains "inactive" for a prolonged period beyond that point could complete the relevant examinations at a significantly later date.

... some 200 students are recorded as having not completed their studies but it was not clear at what point the category of "non-completion" is used (as opposed to "poor attendance"), or at what point "absence" may lead to the termination of studies by the faculty authorities themselves. Furthermore, the team was unable to ascertain how and at what point a distinction is drawn by the faculty between "student drop-out" on the one hand, and the category of "inactive" student ... on the other hand.

The difficulty in counting students is not simply a formality; to the extent that the inactive student category could be masking failure and dropout rates and that this calculation method prevents an accurate analysis of these rates and a deeper understanding of their reasons.

Given that the significance of student-to-staff ratio is about whether students' learning is effectively supported, the rest of this section focuses on this topic.

Many institutions rely on a cadre of visiting staff from Montenegro and abroad. Visiting academics seem to make themselves available to students, either face-to-face or by emails. One institution required that all staff respond to students' emails within a seven-hour period.

However, in general, staff development was found lacking. In addition, the reliance on guest lecturers means that scheduling classes and examinations was often based on the teachers' availability, which led variously to: intense course scheduling over a short period of time; information about course scheduling that was announced week by week; making students wait several hours to take an oral exam; placing teaching assistants at the forefront of student mentoring. In one, perhaps extreme, case

... almost all members of the teaching staff in the three higher academic ranks (27 out of 30) are employed on a part-time basis... working in parallel and primarily in one, two or three other higher education institutions... The situation becomes even more critical as a large proportion of the teaching staff (about half) seem to be replaced from one year to the next.

The University of Montenegro presents specific characteristics that are not shared with the private institutions. Thus, as mentioned in section 2.2, its evaluation report noted that the low level of public funding and the governance of the university led it to admit significant numbers of fee-paying students to compensate. The report recommended "that the University of Montenegro reduce its very high number of study programmes while retaining the present number of teachers so as to attain better staff/student ratios." Moreover, as discussed in the governance chapter (cf. chapter two), the legacy of faculty autonomy means that although "there are good examples of teaching staff being used across faculties",

students at the University of Montenegro “have difficulties participating in courses and using equipment of all faculties as they are enrolled in one faculty and not at the university.”

The learning infrastructure is an important factor in ensuring student attainment. The infrastructure varied from one that was qualified as poor and not accessible to students with disabilities or that lacked study places for students, to one that was attractive, fully accessible to mobility-impaired students and with ample study space in the library. The availability of office space to academic staff was not consistently reported in the evaluation reports. It seems that institutions must report to the ministry the surface available but such statistics do not capture the use of the buildings and whether academic staff have individual offices.

Library stocks appeared to be limited and laboratories were sometimes lacking. In one institution, students reported that academic staff would lend their own books; in another the library was connected to other academic libraries in former Yugoslavia but academic staff complained about not finding the literature that they needed. In a third institution, students were taken to industrial laboratories to compensate for the lack of institutional ones.

Recommendation N° 12: National authorities should:

- Review the type of student and staff data that institutions are required to provide to the ministry in order to ensure accuracy of reporting.
- Discontinue the use of the “inactive student” category.
- Regulate the use of part-time staff and limit the number of parallel teaching appointments a single person can hold.
- Refrain from accrediting study programmes that require laboratory equipment if this is not available.
- Require that the Council of Higher Education focus on the learning and teaching conditions.

Recommendation N° 13: Institutions should:

- Improve the accuracy of the data collection system regarding staff and students.
- Collect and analyse data about patterns of students’ success and failure and develop strategies to address unmet needs.
- Promote good teaching via systematic academic staff development, minimise the use of teaching assistants and recognise good teaching in promotion.
- Develop a comprehensive system to support learning: e.g. academic advisers, preparatory courses for incoming students, communal spaces for students, encouraging online interaction between teaching staff and students and among the

students themselves.

- Make arrangements for students with special needs (e.g. students with disabilities, part-time students).

4. Research

4.1. Building research capacity

In the *“Strategy of Development and Financing of Higher Education in Montenegro 2011-2020”*, it is recognised that research activities are vital as a basis for high quality teaching activities as well as, more broadly, an investment for growth in a small country with scarce natural resources. The University of Montenegro is at present the only Montenegrin higher education institution that has capacity for research of any significance. The private independent faculties are not officially recognised as having a research mission, and the two private universities have very little and mostly applied research activities. Given the small size of the independent faculties, it is doubtful that they will individually have the necessary critical mass in order to also become research institutions.

The University of Montenegro is also the only institution that has been capable of attracting competitive international funding from the EU’s framework programmes, albeit at a fairly low level. In order to reach an international level of research, activities in the immediate term must focus on capacity building.

Due to the lack of strategic capacity at the evaluated institutions that has been discussed above, it has not been possible to identify and systematically invest in areas of strength, either in “pockets of excellence” or in niche areas where Montenegro has natural advantages due to its geography or culture. Nor does there seem to be an active and concrete discussion about what areas of knowledge would be of particular value to Montenegro, for example to solve specific challenges or to foster academic engagement with the country’s history and cultural heritage. New, externally funded centres of excellence set up through the HERIC project could be first steps in this direction, but there is still some way to go before this is fully implemented in university strategies. Identifying and investing in such areas is important in order to build on strengths, and in the longer term to improve the overall quality of research in the system as a whole. At the current state of research and taking into account the low level of available funding described below, priorities must be made.

Research activities suffer from a basic lack of funding, which is to a large extent a consequence of the teaching-focused funding model of higher education institutions. It is necessary that financial resources are allocated to areas where there is potential for developing excellence or to areas that are deemed valuable for Montenegrin society. There is an immediate need to build and sustain infrastructure such as laboratories and libraries. Importantly, this should include access to international journals. It seems that news of research developments comes to the academic community in the evaluated institutions mostly via informal channels such as copies of articles sent by colleagues abroad.

While there was no sign that Montenegro lacks human potential for research, there is a need to support this potential and give it room to develop. More flexible time management of the academic staff, particularly allocating time for research and allowing flexibility in planning the

teaching duties of individual staff would help. Sabbaticals were possible but seemed to be managed in a very rigid manner.

The evaluation reports also discussed a need to train administrative staff to support researchers, for example in applying for external funding, budgeting and ensuring that formal requirements of funding calls were met. There are some good examples of research offices or service centres being established but with insecure funding and insufficiently integrated in the universities.

The development of support services for research, including staff training should be clearly assigned to the vice-rector for research and feature in the implementation of institutional research strategies with proper funding and appropriate deadlines. In the same vein, it would be advisable to offer professional development for academic staff in order to equip them with research-related skills such as developing the team management skills of principal investigators.

Many evaluation reports recommended engagement in international research networks to gain access to know-how, infrastructure and cutting-edge results. In the short term, this might be a solution; however, such activities must be aimed clearly at building capacity in Montenegro itself. Otherwise, there is a danger that they could serve as surrogates for locally performed research and not contribute to building independent research capacity. In other words, participation in international research activities brings new knowledge and know-how to Montenegro, but it does not necessarily make Montenegro a unique contributor of new knowledge, nor does it ensure that knowledge produced in Montenegro takes the local context as a point of departure. When the institutions participate in consortia, it should be clear how the collaboration contributes to capacity building in Montenegro, particularly how and when the collaboration concretely enables local research communities to be self-sufficient.

As in other areas, universities should develop a strategy for building research capacity and contributing to the Montenegrin, European and global knowledge society.

Recommendation N° 14: In order to develop research capacity, national authorities must increase funding and adapt funding models to finance research adequately.

Recommendation N° 15: Institutions interested in developing their research capacity should:

- Identify and focus on existing or potential areas of strength.
- Invest in basic research infrastructure.
- Train administrative and academic staff.
- Participate in international networks with the purpose of developing the research capacity in Montenegro.

4.2. Doctoral education

Only the University of Montenegro, the University of Donja Gorica and the University Mediterranean have the right to offer doctoral education. The doctoral cycle is set at 180 ECTS by CHE, of which 60 are used for initial training and courses and 120 for research. Doctoral candidates are expected to publish two articles in a SCI-listed journal and defend a doctoral thesis.

Good research training is an essential part of building research capacity discussed above but, at the same time, it requires a critical mass of researchers and an inclusive research environment, where doctoral candidates are considered as fellow researchers and professionals. As research activities are rather sparse and doctoral candidates are quite few, this presents a challenge. There is a close connection between the need to build research capacity in the Montenegrin system as a whole and the development of doctoral education. Montenegrin doctorate holders are necessary to provide skilled researchers, but these researchers need to be trained in adequate research environments. Meeting this challenge will need a long-term common strategy for the advancement of research, including doctoral education as a key element.

There are plans in some institutions to establish doctoral schools, which would be a step forward, provided that such a doctoral school will span different faculties and promote interdisciplinarity in order to establish the necessary research environment. In many European countries doctoral schools play a vital role in offering doctoral candidates opportunities for professional development and mobility as well as facilitating quality enhancement and management for doctoral education. Montenegrin universities could learn from these developments while adapting them to their particular situation. It would also seem productive to concretely link the activities of the doctoral school to the wider aim of building research capacity by integrating it in the discussions and implementation of the universities' research strategy.

Joint programmes with research-active institutions abroad would be a first step to give doctoral candidates access to high-level research environments. However, these programmes should explicitly serve to build capacity for the institution as a whole by transferring good practices and institutional know-how. It would also be advisable to explicitly require that programmes with research-active institutions will develop their own capacity for research within a given time period. Moreover, such programmes would require that the universities identify the added value that they could bring to such collaborations.¹⁰

¹⁰ See Jørgensen, Thomas (2012), *CODOC – Cooperation on doctoral education between Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe*, p. 28-29. Belgium: EUA.

http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Publications_homepage_list/EUA_CODOC_web.sflb.ashx

Regarding the structure of the doctoral cycle, one team noted that there was

...a strong discrepancy between the time available for research and the requirements for completing doctoral studies. Doctoral candidates must take one full academic year of taught elements, and they need to publish one or two papers in SCI-listed journals as well as writing a doctoral thesis.

In other European countries, doctoral education generally allocates much less time for taught courses and more for research. Moreover, because Montenegrin doctoral candidates must often go abroad to get access to relevant literature, the actual time for research seems insufficient. In terms of the assessment of doctoral research, the practice of including SCI-listed articles might be practicable (even the norm) in some disciplines, but generally the thesis and the thesis defence should by themselves be adequate to testify that the doctoral candidate has produced research with the level of rigour and originality that would be expected in the discipline. This requires that the universities have in place thesis assessment procedures that can evaluate this, even if parts of the research have undergone international peer review already.

Recommendation N° 16: National authorities should integrate doctoral education as a key element in the overall long-term strategy for building research capacity in Montenegro and allocate the necessary resources for this.

In the short-term, national authorities are invited to review the requirement for doctoral candidates to publish articles, particularly in the view of the limited resources currently allocated to doctoral education.

Recommendation N° 17: Doctoral education is a vital part of building the national research capacity. The universities should ensure that doctoral candidates have access to high-level, inclusive research environments by:

- Establishing interdisciplinary doctoral schools that ensure critical mass of researchers as well as support for doctoral candidates.
- Engaging in international joint programmes with the aim of developing local capacity for doctoral education.
- Reviewing the structure of the third cycle to give more time to research.

5. Service to society

Higher education institutions serve an important role in meeting some of the challenges faced by Montenegrin society as a whole. They are responsible for educating and training more than 50% of a cohort, thus providing the country with human capital for the private and public sector. Institutions also play a role in regional development, including in areas that are experiencing depopulation. Lastly, the universities have a responsibility to develop technology transfer.

Developing human capital is an extremely important mission, particularly because so many young Montenegrins pass through the higher education system. It is essential that graduates are equipped for the labour market and can contribute to the development of the country in more general terms. In order to prepare graduates for future employment, a continuous dialogue between universities and employers is highly recommended so as to ensure that graduates are equipped with the appropriate skills. In the smaller institutions, connections with stakeholders vary, but several evaluation teams were impressed by the relations with the local economy. As discussed in chapter two, several institutions have set up internship schemes, though these are rarely fully integrated in the study programmes or assigned ECTS. There is little evidence of the institutionalised integration of external stakeholders, for example in curriculum development. This is probably largely due to many of the small institutions being very new, but the lack of systematic dialogue could also be seen at larger institutions. As part of the general reform and professionalisation of governance, it would be advisable to embed external stakeholders (e.g. local business) in the governance structures, for example, to consult them on curricula.

Lifelong learning seems largely underdeveloped and the understanding of the concept and its importance seems rather patchy. Where lifelong learning strategies exist, they suffer from a lack of implementation. However, some institutions are successfully engaged in organising events and debates for the civil society, a very laudable practice, which could well be copied by other institutions and developed further.

As stated above, institutions also play a role in regional development. The University of Montenegro has several campuses spread across the country, including in regions that are threatened by depopulation. By contrast, with one exception, the private institutions are concentrated on the coast; two institutions with very similar profiles are located in the city of Bar (17,000 inhabitants in the city; 40,000 inhabitants in the surrounding area). The presence of higher education institutions particularly in Northern Montenegro appears to be a political priority due to the risk of depopulation, and staff from the University of Montenegro do travel to the north to teach, although there are worries that the quality is not the same as in Podgorica. There are also examples of distance learning, but this does not seem to be regulated clearly in the legislation, which makes institutions cautious in setting up such programmes.

Some evaluation reports discussed technology transfer between the university and private companies, but this was done at a rather basic level, for example, a university would give access to its equipment or even have accredited laboratories for specific services to private companies. These activities generate some extra income in the individual faculties, though not at a level that could make up for the overall lack of funding in the institution. Some of the private institutions are also engaged in consultancy work. While such activities are useful to build bridges to the private sector, the comparative advantages of delivering such services directly by the institution or via spin-off companies need to be discussed. In the medium to long term, it would be advisable to expand and deepen collaborations aimed at technology transfer related to building research capacity, as discussed above. Also, institutions could spread the understanding of science and knowledge of technologies as part of their activities with civil society and using lifelong learning.

As research capacity develops, it will be important that institutions and businesses (but also public authorities and agencies) forge stronger and longer-term ties for mutual development of knowledge and human resources. In many European countries, this is done through collaborative doctoral programmes with non-university partners.¹¹ Establishing such programmes could be a goal in the longer term.

Recommendation N° 18: National authorities should support the development of distance learning and lifelong learning programmes, particularly by removing any existing legal obstacles.

Recommendation N° 19: Institutions should continue and deepen their engagement with other stakeholders through:

- Systematic dialogue concerning study programme and curriculum development, including of lifelong learning provision.
- Playing an active role in the local civil society, for instance through the organisation of public events on topical issues.
- Developing technology transfer with non-academic stakeholders (in the case of research-active institutions).

¹¹ Borrell-Damian, Lidia (2009) *Collaborative Doctoral Education*. Belgium: EUA.
<http://www.eua.be/publications/eua-reports-studies-and-occasional-papers.aspx>

6. Internationalisation

Internationalisation has become an increasingly strategic priority for European higher education institutions. The creation of the European Higher Education Area is but one manifestation of a broader and deeper trend toward developing an international footprint by establishing links with European and non-European institutions. Such links, at their best, allow the institutions to improve and promote the quality of their teaching provision and research activities.

The current situation in Montenegro could be described as follows:

1. The importance of internationalisation is clearly recognised by all the institutions that were evaluated. All have aspirations to progress their internationalisation further although these aspirations are not supported by targets in key areas or by adequate resources. In general, the faculties are very young and do not yet have the capacity to develop this area. The international capacity of the largest university is constrained by an organisational culture that stresses faculty autonomy.
2. The two largest universities are the more active internationally even if their level of activities is rather modest. They are involved in some Tempus and Erasmus projects and have a number of agreements signed with foreign universities. Their weak level of internationalisation is linked to limited staffing and financial resources.
3. By and large, all institutions maintain some links to institutions abroad but these are generally few in number and limited to the Balkan region. Although there are reported links to institutions further afield (e.g., Canada, Italy, Ukraine), these are exceptions rather than the rule.
4. Low levels of staff and student outgoing mobility are reported across the higher education sector. Evidence from the largest university points to problems in recognising study abroad periods.
5. Scanty evidence of “internationalisation at home”¹² is found in the evaluation reports. Thus, almost all of them noted the lack of courses in non-national languages as limiting the attractiveness of Montenegrin institutions to international students, although some institutions were planning to develop such courses and a good proportion of staff spoke English. In some institutions students, are given

¹² “Internationalisation at home” refers to the integration of an international perspective in study programmes, foreign language instruction, embracing different teaching cultures to adapt to different learners’ needs, staff and student development of intercultural understanding, etc. “Internationalisation abroad” generally includes some of the following activities: recruitment of international students, strategic institutional alliances, staff and student exchange, research and educational partnerships, etc.

opportunities to develop English skills. It is unclear from the evaluation reports if offering courses in English or joint study programmes requires a specific authorisation process. In one university, a large number of academic staff members were educated abroad. This university also emphasised language skills acquisition for all its students.

6. Basic administrative service functions (e.g. housing) and some crucial academic information (e.g. about language courses) appear to be underdeveloped. There is no evidence of institutions attempting to identify the added value of Montenegrin higher education for foreign students in order to attract international students.

Recommendation N° 20: National authorities, in dialogue with the higher education institutions, should identify ways to overcome obstacles to internationalisation (e.g. to student and staff mobility, offering courses in non-national languages and joint study programme delivery) and develop a national internationalisation strategy to support the promotion of Montenegro as a study destination.

Recommendation N° 21: The institutions should:

- Elaborate an internationalisation strategy (with clear quantitative and geographical targets) that would in the longer term extend beyond the Balkan region. Such a strategy should consider the following aspects: promoting student and staff mobility, developing a language policy, exploring opportunities offered by international funding programmes (e.g. scholarship programmes), developing joint programmes, attracting visiting professors from outside the Balkans and developing marketing material.
- Consider creating an international office or enhancing the capacity of an existing one and assigning a senior officer (vice-dean or vice-rector) to lead this area.
- Strengthen their hosting capacity by developing housing and advising to mobile students, both outgoing and incoming.

7. Conclusion

This report has identified 21 recommendations, divided almost equally between those addressed to the institutions and those addressed to the national authorities. However, while having strong higher education institutions is a necessary component of a good higher education system, it is not sufficient. Thus, it will be crucial to address four systemic weaknesses of the higher education sector in Montenegro.

Firstly, there are too many small institutions. This means that each one lacks critical mass to effectively support the shift to student-centred learning, develop research activities, engage effectively in the community and internationalise.

Secondly, too many institutions are focused on business management training. This exacerbates competition and makes any institutional cooperation within Montenegro unlikely, even though such cooperation is essential in order to progress further. Some of the small neighbouring institutions should be working closer together or even encouraged to merge.

Thirdly, as the largest and oldest institution, the University of Montenegro has a leadership role to play in the country. It should open up to the other institutions and work with them so as to ensure good quality across the sector. This means for instance, sharing large infrastructures and expensive equipment.

Fourthly, all institutions need to develop a higher level of strategic capacity in order to articulate and implement their goals in all of the areas mentioned in this report. Important steps in this direction will be to move away from a personalised decision-making process based on the rector to institutionalised processes. Moreover, it would be important to find a sustainable balance of responsibilities between faculties and central management and to develop the professional skills of administrative and academic staff.

Addressing these weaknesses requires a national discussion on the areas of knowledge that Montenegro needs for its development. Incentives could then be introduced to encourage institutions to develop in these directions and to cooperate. The external quality assurance system could support such developments.

It is hoped that these recommendations will be discussed nationally and will lead to useful institutional developments in Montenegro. The Institutional Evaluation Programme remains at the disposal of the institutions and the national authorities for any follow-up activities.

Annex: The Institutional Evaluation Programme

1.1 General approach

The Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) is an independent membership service of the European University Association (EUA) that offers evaluations to support the participating institutions in the continuing development of their strategic management and internal quality culture. The IEP is a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and is listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

The distinctive features of the Institutional Evaluation Programme are:

- A strong emphasis on the self-evaluation phase
- A European and international perspective
- A peer-review approach
- A support to improvement

The focus of IEP is the institution as a whole and not individual study programmes or units. It focuses upon:

- Decision-making processes, institutional structures and effectiveness of strategic management.
- Relevance of internal quality processes and the degree to which their outcomes are used in decision-making and strategic management as well as perceived gaps in these internal mechanisms.

The evaluation is guided by four key questions, which are based on a “fitness for (and of) purpose” approach:

- What is the institution trying to do?
- How is the institution trying to do it?
- How does the institution know it works?
- How does the institution change in order to improve?

The evaluations are mission-driven; that is, each institution is evaluated in the context of its own mission and objectives. Therefore, the evaluation reports do not compare or rank institutions.

1.2 Steps in the evaluation

The project took place between September 2013 and December 2014. Following receipt of the institutions’ registration, a series of five steps were undertaken in the course of these evaluations.

1.2.1 Preparatory workshops

Two workshops were organised to prepare the institution and the evaluation teams:

- A workshop for the participating institutions was offered to introduce them to the *Guidelines for Institutions*, the IEP philosophy and methodology and, more particularly, to respond to questions regarding the self-evaluation process and report.
- A workshop for the evaluation teams was organised during the 2013 Annual Seminar, annual event that gathers together the IEP pool of experts at the beginning of the academic year. This workshop focused largely on the Montenegrin higher education context.

1.2.2 Self-evaluation process and report

Following the first workshop, the institutions prepared their self-evaluation report. The IEP Guidelines stressed that the self-evaluation process is as important as the resulting self-evaluation report. The Guidelines provided pointers on how to select the members of the self-evaluation group and ideas on how to involve the university community in the process: from the data collection phase to receiving comments about the draft self-evaluation report.

1.2.3 Evaluation visits

The IEP teams visited the institutions twice:

- Each of the first visits lasted a day and a half. The purpose of the first visit was to allow the team to become acquainted with the institution in its local context and to request additional information if necessary. Meetings were held with institutional and faculty leaders, academic and administrative staff, students and external stakeholders.
- Each of the second visits lasted two and a half days (except in the smaller institutions where the visit was a day and a half). The purpose of the second visit was to deepen the team's knowledge of the institution and to formulate and confirm its findings. This visit ended with an oral presentation of the evaluation report to the institution and, in some cases, external stakeholders.

1.2.4 Evaluation reports

The team coordinators prepared the draft evaluation reports, in consultation with their respective team members. They were sent to the institutions for correction of factual errors and the final versions were published on the IEP website.

1.2.5 Post-evaluation workshop

A post-evaluation workshop was organised to discuss this cross-cutting summary report and to provide the participating institutions with an opportunity to share how they intend to address the recommendations that they received.