

TWINNING PROJECT FICHE

1 Basic Information

- 1.1 Programme:** ENPI Annual Action Programme 2011 Azerbaijan
- 1.2 Twinning Number:** AZ/14/ENP/OT/31
- 1.3 Title:** Support to the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan for further adherence of the higher education system to the European Higher Education Area (AZ-ad-EHEA)
- 1.4 Sector:** Education
- 1.5 Beneficiary country:** Republic of Azerbaijan

2 Objectives

2.1 Overall Objective(s):

To further develop Azerbaijan's higher education system through integration in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

2.2 Project purpose:

Increase the institutional capacities of the Ministry of Education and other key institutions of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the development of Bologna related policies and the implementation of the EHEA objectives and reference tools.

2.3 Contribution to National Development Plan/Cooperation agreement/Association Agreement/Action Plan

The project is conceived in line with priorities set out in the [ENPI Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013](#), namely Priority Area 1: Support for Democratic Development and Good Governance, Sub-priority 4: Education, science and people-to-people contacts/exchanges.

The project reflects strategic objectives under the [EU-Azerbaijan ENP Action Plan](#), as set out in article 4.7.1 Education, training and youth. Here, support is foreseen for the reform and modernisation of the education and training systems within the framework of Azerbaijan's reform programme, including

- Higher education sector reforms in line with the principles of the Bologna process;
- Quality enhancement and improvement of the accreditation system for higher education institutions;
- Enhanced policy dialogue between EU and Azerbaijani authorities in the field of education, training and youth;
- Enhanced international cooperation, mobility and exchange;

The Twinning project should be instrumental for Azerbaijan's successful adherence to the EHEA, and to furthering the reform of the Azerbaijani HE system.

3 Description

3.1 Background and Justification:

Current situation in the Higher Education System of Azerbaijan

EHEA/BOLOGNA REFORMS

Higher Education (HE) reforms started in Azerbaijan with the adoption of a new law in 1992. From 1993 to 1997 the country introduced a two-cycle system (4+2) with Bachelor and Master degrees. For the third cycle it maintained the ‘aspirantura’ until the introduction of the term Doctoral degree with the adoption of the new education law in 2009. The Ministry of Education (MoE) and HEIs are currently working on the introduction of doctoral degree programmes.

Azerbaijan joined the Bologna Process in 2005 and has since progressed with the implementation of certain ‘Bologna’ tools and notions, and the objectives of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), which was officially established in 2010. A number of regulating documents were adopted along the way.

Amongst others Azerbaijan has gradually introduced a credit system for the first and second cycle. At present the allocation of credits for the third cycle is under discussion and there are still different systems in place. Despite attempts to establish a singular system through a recent decree more groundwork is needed to raise the awareness of the implications and requirements for a meaningful ECTS system.

At institutional level curricular reform has enjoyed substantial support through the Tempus programme. A Diploma Supplement template is available but yet missing certain elements (e.g. chapter 8). A national ENIC office in the MoE provides information about the Azerbaijan education system and treats an increasing caseload of requests for recognition of foreign degrees.

A law on higher education is not yet established but under discussion in the MoE. One major concern is the facilitation (and regulation) of mobility between faculties and between universities and the recognition of study periods at/from other universities.

Most universities have established units for quality assurance, some quite successfully, with support provided under the Tempus programme. But a quality assurance system for the Higher Education sector is not in place. The notions of an EHEA compatible system based on public responsibility and accountability/autonomy of universities aren’t well known, or else are considered a mid- to long-term goal for which the system needs to transform first. Quality assurance is generally still considered an internal and external audit mechanism and used as a synonym to the accreditation procedures and decisions that are in the MoE’s remit. The establishment of an operational national quality assurance system will require substantial and comprehensive spadework at macro- and micro level.

A National Qualifications Framework (AzQF) was developed and is currently awaiting governmental adoption. The parts of this framework relevant for Higher Education should be further elaborated and implemented in line with the overarching qualifications framework of the EHEA, in order to become a meaningful tool for the country’s reform agenda. The notions of learning outcomes and student centred learning are underdeveloped. Different credit systems are used at different universities and generally they are not linked to learning outcomes and student workload but rather to the duration of courses and/or contact hours. A new decree for a unified system of credit allocation was issued on 24th December 2013, but still doesn’t reflect the guidelines included in the ECTS users’ guide coordinated by the European Commission.

Validation of qualifications and programmes with employers and social partners occur but are the exception rather than the rule.

Student involvement in policy development and higher education governance is also not general practice.

As a consequence of the traditional separation of scientific research from higher education there is a substantial lack of research activities, skills and infrastructure at universities, in particular in the third cycle (PhD degrees). Scientific research is mainly taking place at the Academies of Sciences, which are under direct supervision of the President of Azerbaijan. Research at HEIs is underdeveloped, and limited public funds are available. Research projects at public universities often require approval by the State Academy of Science. HEIs also need to agree the number of PhD enrolments with the MoE, while the topic of each doctoral thesis requires the approval of the [Higher Attestation Commission](#) (VAK).

Full professors at HEIs are expected to carry out research, publish in international journals etc. beside their regular teaching duties. Still, this often depends mainly on private interest/initiative. University and MoE staff tend to identify the funding system as one of the main causes, firstly because the treasury provides no earmarked funding for research to universities, and secondly because the country has switched to a per-capita funding of universities in 2007. However, the problem seems deeper rooted. While there seems to be some good practice at certain universities, at others there seems to be a severe lack of understanding, of capacities to carry out academic research and compete for public and/or private funding. Hence there is also a low participation of Azerbaijan in international research programmes (FP7, Marie Curie Actions, etc.).

A comprehensive and consolidated approach to implementing higher education reforms and an EHEA compatible system will also need to take into account the system's architecture: On the one side Azerbaijan has a highly centralised governance system. The Cabinet of Ministers and the MoE govern the HE system. Financing is under the remit of the President's Office. The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan appoints university rectors. Umbrella or intermediary bodies e.g. to represent and develop joint interests of HEIs or researchers don't exist. The MoE is competent to develop standards for higher education (to be approved by the Cabinet of Ministers) and verify their implementation for all universities. But there is also a complex network of competent supervisory authorities. Different line ministries have authority over the management of different specialised public universities (military, naval, security, etc.). Only 20 (out of 55) universities are under direct MoE supervision.

Under these circumstances Azerbaijan's progress since joining the Bologna Process in 2005 should not be underestimated. Nevertheless a consolidated effort at system level and substantial awareness rising are required for all stakeholders to act in concert, so that for Azerbaijan can comprehensively implement its commitments in the Bologna Process and fully adhere to the EHEA.

NEW MOMENTUM

This being said a new momentum in the education sector in Azerbaijan is observable.

In September 2009, a new Education Law was adopted, which provides a comprehensive framework for educational policies in Azerbaijan. New and important national strategies recognise modernisation of the education system and human capital development as key priorities for the imminent future: The national development concept "Azerbaijan 2020: Look into the future" (2013) and the State Strategy on Development of Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan adopted in October 2013).

With reference to the higher education reform, the Concept 2020 includes the following main programmatic objectives: Modern management, increased independence for education insti-

tutions, Universities developing into centres of education, research and innovation; the expansion of international relations of Azerbaijani institutions through further adherence to the EHEA/Bologna Process.

The State Strategy sets the government's priority for the reform of the sector, mainly related to quality, socio-economic relevance, human resources capacity, governance and overall participation/access to education. In the strategy, the government has clearly expressed its will to approximate the education and training system of Azerbaijan to the EU policies and practices in this area.

A new Minister of Education has come into office in May 2013 who is explicitly and actively committed to an effective implementation of the State Strategy.

Since summer 2013 the MoE is gradually being restructured, and new staff with diverse backgrounds joined various MoE departments. Since early 2014 this also affects the remit and structure of the Department for Higher Education and Science; secondary vocational education and international student exchange were integrated from other departments, and in the end of April 2014 the department consists of a unit each for Scientific Research, Higher Education, and Student Support and International Exchange Programmes.¹

By mid-2014 the MoE intends to finalise an action plan for the implementation of the state strategy with clear objectives, responsibilities and timelines. Governmental approval is expected by the end of 2014.

Within the MoE's jurisdiction, the opportunities for substantial and comprehensive sector reforms are evident. Its explicit commitment to achieving international standards and to developing in line with EU policies and good practice are a favourable point of departure for further reforms as well as effective external assistance.

CHALLENGES

But there is also a growing awareness of the challenges the MoE faces in developing a modern education system with a quality comparable to European standards. The main challenges are:

- High expectations for quick results.
- The challenge to navigate a running system with insufficient and frequently out-dated resources and mechanisms through comprehensive and deep-rooted reforms.
- A lack of sufficient capacities (staff, know-how and mechanisms) to undertake the necessary tasks in the MoE.
- Limitations to the MoE's mandate/competences complicate policy implementation and require extensive consultation and coordination, e.g.
 - The MoE's mandate is mainly on setting and guarding/monitoring standards and procedures.
 - Financing and management is in the remit of other governmental authorities (the Ministry of Finance and other intermediaries for funding, the Executive Powers for preschool management, different line Ministries for the management of different VET and HE institutions etc.).
 - Out of the 52 higher education institutions in Azerbaijan (37 public, 15 private), only 20 are under direct MoE supervision.

¹ Organisation Chart end of April 2014 attached

- Without comprehensive capacity building measures and careful sequencing there is a risk that the establishment of new standards and compliance control lead to system failure. This could present a challenge in view of available resources and fixed staff contingencies of the MoE.

Future EU assistance to the education sector should be designed and delivered with a view to these challenges and incorporate appropriate measures to ensure the system and actors can fully absorb the assistance towards sustainable benefits, and a synchronised donor approach.

Introduction to the project (origin of the project, outline why it is being undertaken)

The priorities outlined in the AZ-ad-EHEA project² were identified in consultation with representatives of the MoE and HEIs and also the Higher Education Reform Experts (HERE) network and the National Tempus Office (now National Erasmus+ Office). Even though the chosen components are treated separately in this project fiche they are closely interlinked and require a comprehensive project implementation.

At the end of the project, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan and other key institutions should have substantially strengthened institutional capacities for the development of Bologna related reforms. They should also have at their disposal a set of key policies, reference tools and a mid-term strategy for the full implementation of the EHEA objectives.

The project comprises two areas of intervention:

The first one aims at enhancing the institutional capacities and set up, in particular the institutional architecture and legal and normative framework and individual professional know-how to coordinate EHEA-compliant reforms (results 1 and 2). It should be based on a thorough assessment and mapping of set up, mechanisms and institutional and individual professional capacities. This element is imperative for a comprehensive, efficient and sustainable implementation of the project objectives. A legislative review and corresponding recommendations will contribute to the successful implementation of results 2 and 3.

The second area of intervention provides concrete assistance to implement core elements of the EHEA, by assisting with the implementation of an EHEA compliant AzQF for higher education qualifications (result 2) and the establishment of viable procedures and mechanisms for program evaluation and accreditation (result 3).

Crucial for the project's success is an ongoing consultation with stakeholders throughout its duration. To this end, a project steering committee should be set up within the first two months of the project. The committee should incorporate major stakeholders, such as Twinning Partners other concerned Ministries, representatives of HEIs (including students) and institutions and stakeholders that are instrumental to fully implement the tools and strategies developed in the project. Where possible, the institutions represented in the steering committee should also second contact persons and/or working group members who are closely and actively involved in the project's implementation.

The committee should meet on quarterly basis to monitor/advise on issues related to the project's implementation, to endorse the project's results and ensure their further implementation and/or application, beyond the duration of the AZ-ad-EHEA project. The steering committee ensures a maximum of sustainability for the project's output.

² AZ-ad-EHEA stands for "Support to the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan for further adherence of the higher education system to the European Higher Education Area"

The project is addressing immediate institutional and operational priorities for a comprehensive implementation and further development of core Bologna reforms. Its scope remains limited and cannot fully or equally address all EHEA objectives / Bologna action lines. However, it is highly important that the first set of interventions (aiming at institutional and individual capacities) takes into account all Bologna action lines.

3.2 Linked activities (other international and national initiatives):

While several donors are active in Azerbaijan's education sector, very few have focused priorities on the implementation of the Bologna process in Higher Education.

In higher education, the Tempus – the EU programme which supports the modernisation of higher education is the most prominent external assistance supporting the system's voluntary convergence to the EHEA. Since 1995 it has been assisting the development of higher education in Azerbaijan. This assistance is provided through international consortia and is mainly aimed at institutional or faculty level.

Since the launching of Bologna Process the Tempus programme has been increasingly focusing on Bologna Process action lines, mainly through supporting bottom-up initiatives with universities. Between 1995 and 2013, over 17 million EUR were invested in Azerbaijan through 46 Tempus projects. Currently the country participates in 30 Tempus IV projects. Numerous field-monitoring reports confirm the programme's high relevance and considerable effect at individual and institutional level, thanks to its bottom up approach and emphasis on university cooperation. Even though Tempus cooperates well with national authorities it has had a limited impact at system level.

The Tempus programme has come to an end on 31/12/2013. The on-going projects (including those which have been selected in 2013 under the 6th Call) will continue their activities until the end of their grant agreement. As of 2014, Tempus-like activities, namely capacity building activities, will be part of a new cooperation programme named Erasmus+ which replaces Erasmus Mundus, Tempus and Youth in Action programmes. Azerbaijan is eligible to take part as a Partner country in higher education and youth actions of the programme.

Erasmus+ will support knowledge alliances of HEIs and enterprises, as well as strategic partnerships for cross-sectoral cooperation and international mobility schemes for HE students. These actions to take an essential bottom-up approach to reforming systems at institutional level. At Azerbaijan's system level their impact may remain limited. This twinning project proposes to complement the action of EU programmes by targeting directly the relevant higher education authorities.

Further EU support in the area of higher education was provided through TAIEX: In early 2012, a mission was carried out for the "Assessment of existing legislation on Regulation of the higher education system in Azerbaijan" (Int Markt IND/EXP 45700). Late in 2013 expertise was provided for the allocation of ECTS in doctoral degree programmes. The missions resulted in a number of proposals to the MoE on accreditation, quality control and assurance, the assessment of teachers and students, and PhD education, and others.

This experience underpins the need for complementary, consolidated "top-down" support to/through the authorities for comprehensive and sustainable system changes in line with the country's commitments to adhere to the European Higher Education Area.

The World Bank has submitted a draft project proposal to the Government for a higher education reform project, which is currently under consideration. The offer addresses a range of needs at system and at institutional level; at system level capacity building of the MOE and other relevant organisations, assistance with the establishment of a quality assurance body and system and the reform of the HE financing system, and diversifying and equalising ac-

cess to tertiary education; at institutional level capacity building of HEIs in terms of institutional leadership and management, and quality assurance. The offer is currently under consideration by the MoE. The EUD and World Bank maintain an open exchange on possible future support with each other as well as with the relevant MoE staff and the Minister. All partners acknowledge the added value of EU assistance for Azerbaijan to meet its commitments in the Bologna Process and the higher education system to adhere to the EHEA.

At national level, a number of strategic plans and initiatives are interlinked with the project's objectives:

- The 'State Strategy on Development of Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan' (approved by Presidential Decree in October 2013) awaits implementation. At the strategy's core are issues related to quality, socio-economic relevance, human resources, institutional capacity and overall participation/access to education. In the strategy, the government has emphasised commitment to approximating the education and training system of Azerbaijan to the EU policies and practices and Bologna. In February 2014 the MoE announced [Key Priorities of Higher Educational Reforms to be implemented by the Ministry of Education](#), which comprises priorities for immediate action. By the end of 2014 the MoE will have finalised an action plan for the strategy's implementation. This project was designed in close alignment with the MoE's action plan in the area of Higher Education and will build on the immediate action undertaken in 2014.
- Accreditation in Azerbaijan came to a halt in early 2013. This is causing increasing conflict with other stipulations, which are based on whether or not an institution was granted accreditation. One of the MoE's priorities is to re-launch the accreditation of institutions and programmes at all levels of education. The process will be based on the [Rules for accreditation of educational institutions](#) approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in September 2010. A timeframe of 18 months is foreseen for the first round of accreditations. This timeframe – even in the case of some delay – will allow the project to conduct a timely mapping of existing quality assurance and accreditation practice in higher education in Azerbaijan and preparation of a gap analysis before elaborating concrete proposals for the gradual establishment of an EHEA compatible quality assurance system in Azerbaijan.
- A National Qualifications Framework (AzQF) has been elaborated with the support of the ETF with additional expertise provided by the Council of Europe. The Framework is currently awaiting approval. It will however require substantial further attention to embed the EHEA objectives in higher education and ensure that real changes take place. Among others it should inform and facilitate curriculum design and reform, promote the student experience, employability, establish clear horizontal and vertical pathways and integrate the framework and its elements in the future quality assurance system for higher education. In view of the imminent approval of the AzQF the project will be instrumental for the framework's further implementation in line with the overarching EHEA framework, and corresponding trends and good practice in EU member states.

3.3 Results

The project is designed with an emphasis on the policy level of EHEA reforms and the necessary architecture (legislation, policy tools and steering and implementation mechanisms and bodies). It will assist with the establishment of an EHEA compliant quality assurance system and further development of the national qualifications framework for higher education qualifications in line with the overarching EHEA framework. It will provide corresponding assistance for legal and normative framework revisions, capacity building and national coordination mechanisms. It will also contribute to elaborating a rollout plan for application and further implementation of EHEA objectives and tools. This action will complement the other EU programmes through supporting reforms at system level. It will further provide a basis for

further EU assistance at sector and institutional level. The mandatory results are defined as follows:

Result 1: The legal and normative framework for HE is reviewed and concrete recommendations for adapting legislation relevant to QA and the HE sections of the AzQF in Azerbaijan are developed.

Since Azerbaijan joined the Bologna process in 2005, a series of laws, decrees and regulations have been adopted to introduce Bologna compatible reforms in the HE system. Taking stock of the existing legal and normative acts related to the Bologna process and related reforms, a gap analysis (a comparative review of Azerbaijan's legislation with that of other member countries of the EHEA), should lead to a process of approximation.

Indicators of achievement

- A comparative review of Azerbaijan's present legislation and the required framework;
- List of needed revisions of the legal & normative framework;
- Recommended texts of revised laws, decrees & bylaws;
- The recommended changes are endorsed by the MoE.

Result 2: The coordination & networking capacity of the MoE and relevant stakeholders is enhanced on the basis of good practice examples in the EHEA.

A series of assessments will be undertaken at the beginning of the project to address potential deficiencies in the overall institutional set up (both inside the MoE and in the existing related institutions), the administrative processes and coordination mechanisms. This combined with a critical review of progress with EHEA/Bologna reforms so far should lead to a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the present situation. It should result in a proposal of appropriate changes strengthening the overall coordination, organisation and further planning and monitoring of Bologna reforms. If endorsed by the MoE and relevant stakeholders, these reviews should open the way to a comprehensive institutional reform. This component will support the establishment of an operational network of Bologna experts with the mandate and means to serve as resource persons at the level of universities and faculties and facilitate a comprehensive implementation of EHEA reforms across Azerbaijan. And it will assist with the preparation and implementation result of a communication and public awareness strategy promoting implications and benefits of EHEA adherence for Azerbaijan.

Indicators of achievement

- Assessments of overall institutional set up, administrative processes and coordination mechanisms
- Progress review of EHEA/Bologna reforms in Azerbaijan
- Recommendations on institutional and administrative changes with organisation chart on coordination of EHEA reforms to ensure an efficient and participatory consultation;
- Increased professional efficiency and participatory consultation, coordination and implementation in implementation of Bologna reforms and action lines in Azerbaijan by the relevant actors (Ministries, Centres and Agencies, HEIs, student unions, social partners, and other concerned institutions and bodies)
- Training and needs assessment prepared and training programme/strategy under way
- An operational national Bologna Committee with annual work plan
- National EHEA/Bologna reference website
- Recommendations and roadmap for the future EHEA compliant system and their endorsement by the MoE.

- Communication strategy and improved public awareness of the Bologna process within the key institutions and among a wider public and support for EHEA reforms and benefits

Result 3: The AzQF sections relevant for higher education are developed in line with the EHEA QF in cooperation with HEIs. A roadmap for the full implementation of the framework in higher education is developed.

Indicators of achievement

- The AzQF sections relevant for higher education are in line with the overarching qualifications framework of the EHEA and suggested changes, if appropriate, submitted to authorities for approval.
- The AzQF attributes (an appropriate level of) skills, knowledge and competences for qualifications in all three cycles of higher education.
- The AzQF shows clear interface and pathways between levels and education strands (i.a. VET and higher education), especially with a view to level 5, which currently issues sub-bachelor diploma at colleges and further access to level 6.
- The capacity of Azerbaijani experts from government and higher education institutions is enhanced to implement and maintain the AzQF sections relevant for higher education and related tools.
- Universities are provided with a roadmap for the (further) development of doctoral degree programmes approved by the Ministry of Education.
- A roadmap for the AzQF implementation leading to successful self-certification³ is submitted for approval by authorities.
- The national QA system for HE refers to the AzQF sections relevant for higher education;

Result 4: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in HE in Azerbaijan are developed in line with the European Standards and Guidelines for QA and tested with three HE institutions.

Indicators of achievement

- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in HE in Azerbaijan are developed together with stakeholder institutions
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in HE in Azerbaijan are tested with three HEIs (test run of internal and external evaluation)
- Test run is analysed and results integrated in Standards and Guidelines and proposed roadmap.
- Experience and results of pilot exercise are documented, disseminated and discussed with stakeholder institutions such as ministries, other competent bodies, the academic community.
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in HE in Azerbaijan are designed by the Ministry of Education and submitted to authorities for approval.

³ The self-certification is a process by which the competent authorities of the country concerned verify that the national qualifications framework is compatible with the overarching EHEA Framework. The self-certification process should also include input from foreign experts. Once the self-certification process has been completed, self-certification reports should be published so that partners in the European Higher Education Area may access them. Self-certification reports submitted to the Bologna Secretariat and/or the Council of Europe. Detailed information is available at www.ehea.info.

- A blueprint for an QA Agency for HE in Azerbaijan is developed by the Ministry of Education and submitted to authorities for approval. It includes proposals for agency statutes, an agency organisation chart, job descriptions and profiles for agency staff, profiles for external reviewers (for external evaluation), the agency's and experts operating processes.
- A roadmap for the implementation of an EHEA compatible QA system and associated reforms is designed by the Ministry of Education and submitted for approval by authorities.

While drafting the work plan for this project, the twinning partners (MoE and the selected Member State/s) will set up measurable indicators and benchmarks on the basis of those given above and in the logical framework (Annex 1) and the commonly agreed activities and outputs.

3.4 Activities

In order to meet the mandatory results, the partners may add alternative or complementary activities and outputs to those identified in this section.

Component 0: Visibility actions

Activity 0.1 Kick-off meeting

Minimum output:

An event at the beginning of the Twinning project presenting it and its goals to the main stakeholders and media

Activity 0.2 Final conference

Minimum output:

An event just before the end of the Twinning project presenting the main results achieved to the main stakeholders and media and consulting priorities for future action

Result 1: The legal and normative framework for HE is reviewed. Concrete recommendations for adapting legislation relevant to QA and HE part of QF in Azerbaijan prepared.

Activity 1.1 Facilitate identification, translation and mapping of legislation (laws, by-laws, rules, decrees etc) relevant for Bologna/EHEA and in particular to QA and AzQF sections relevant for higher education

Minimum output/s

Document package and mapping report

Activity 1.2 Support the elaboration of concrete recommendations for adapting legislation relevant to QA and the AzQF sections relevant for higher education, and adherence to the EHEA , with detailed explanatory notes for the proposed revisions, for submission to decision making bodies along-side with the concrete proposal

Minimum output/s

Recommendations for and proposed revisions of relevant legislation; detailed explanatory notes

Result 2: The coordination & networking capacity of the MoE and relevant stakeholders is enhanced on the basis of good practice examples in the EHEA.

Activity 2.1 Progress review of EHEA/Bologna reforms in Azerbaijan

Minimum output/s:

Detailed report and recommendations; discussion of report with stakeholders

Activity 2.2 Based on comparison with best practices in similar administrative set up in EHEA, assess the present institutional set up within the MoE and in the related institutions, notably organisation chart, line of responsibilities and command, administrative processes, information and document circulation, the interaction between the Departments and Divisions directly concerned with the implementation of the Bologna process and other key institutions and partners, job classifications, internal and external information sharing, coordination and consultation mechanisms etc. and recommend improvements for the overall institutional architecture

Minimum output/s

Detailed report and recommendations

Activity 2.3 Facilitate the preparation of a medium-term work-plan/roadmap for further action with timelines, responsibilities and where appropriate an indication of required resources.

Minimum output/s

Work-plan/ roadmap and recommendations

Activity 2.4 Assist the relevant institutions to implement the recommendations, including the establishment of appropriate steering, coordinating and training bodies and/or mechanisms, organising trainings, issuing rules and procedures etc.

Minimum output/s

ToR for steering, coordinating and training bodies and/or mechanisms, facilitation of first activities as appropriate

Activity 2.5 To conduct a training needs analysis (TNA) to identify priority areas where training will need to be performed. TNA and recommendations are submitted to the Beneficiary for approval.

Minimum output/s

TNA and recommendations

Activity 2.6 Organise a training programme and train experts to advise and consult the further implementation process of the EHEA in Azerbaijan within a functional domestic expert network including study tours to and/or internships in relevant institutions in the Twinning partner country for officials of the institutions concerned who are directly involved in the Bologna process implementation.

Minimum output/s

Training programme; Trained key staff and experts

Activity 2.7 Assist in preparing a public awareness and communication strategy on Bologna/EHEA issues and its implementation

Minimum output/s

Communication strategy (objectives, target groups, key messages, communication channels, timescale, evaluation)

Result 3: The AzQF sections relevant for higher education are developed in line with the EHEA QF in cooperation with HEIs. A roadmap for the full implementation of the framework(s) in higher education is agreed.

Activity 3.1 Train/update the experts on the EHEA context, the QF EHEA, external reference points and EHEA trends and practice, mapping relevant rules, regulations and practice at HEIs in Azerbaijan by the working group members.

Minimum output/s

Trained experts, training material/reference literature & documentation; documentation of inventory and mapping report;

Activity 3.2 Facilitate a verification process of the AzQF against the overarching QF EHEA (gap analysis).

Minimum output/s

Gap analysis/report and recommendations

Activity 3.3 Assist with the elaboration of a concrete proposal for aligning higher education qualifications and curricula with the framework for HE qualifications; Specific emphasis on the development of third cycle/doctoral degree programmes.

Minimum output/s

Concrete proposal for QF alignment in HE

Activity 3.4 Facilitate the elaboration of a roadmap for the further implementation of the AzQF sections relevant for higher education (leading towards a successful self-certification) with a specific emphasis on a realistic development plan for doctoral degree programmes.

Minimum output/s

Roadmap with objectives, responsibilities, timelines and an indication of required resources

Activity 3.5 Facilitate the elaboration of a proposal for reflecting the HE part of the AzQF in Azerbaijan's recognition procedures and practice

Minimum output/s

Proposal for updating recognition procedures and practice

Result 4: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in HE in Azerbaijan are developed in line with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance. 3 institutions have undergone an internal and external evaluation (pilot).

Activity 4.1 Train/update the experts on the EHEA context, the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA and EHEA trends and practice

Minimum output/s

Trained experts, training material/reference literature & documentation; documentation of inventory;

Activity 4.2 Facilitate the mapping of existing Quality Assurance and accreditation practice in Azerbaijan & carry out gap analysis and issue draft report and recommendations

Minimum output/s

Gap analysis/report and recommendations

Activity 4.3 Assist with the elaboration of a concrete proposal for the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Azerbaijan

Minimum output/s

Proposal for the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Azerbaijan

Activity 4.4 Facilitate the elaboration of a roadmap for the further implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Azerbaijan, leading towards

full recognition of the QA system in Azerbaijan. Facilitate the incorporation of a blueprint/model for an EHEA compatible Quality Assurance Agency for HE in Azerbaijan in the roadmap. Submit roadmap and blueprint to the Project Steering Committee for approval.

Minimum output/s

Roadmap; Blueprint for QA agency with drafts of statutes, organisation chart, job descriptions, staff profiles, profiles of external reviewers/experts, operating processes; Roadmap for S&G implementation;

Activity 4.5 Coordinate a trial/test run of these Standards and Guidelines with 3 HEIs in Azerbaijan. Decide on the feasible scope of the exercise (programme and institutional evaluation), number of programmes; to elaborate criteria and indicators for the test run, a report format.

Minimum output/s

Report and documentation of trial/test run

Activity 4.6 Jointly analyse results of the trial and integrate in the proposal for the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance and roadmap. Ensure appropriate dissemination

Minimum output/s

Revised proposal for Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance, Agency blueprint and roadmap

3.5 Means/ Input from the MS Partner Administration

3.5.1 Profile and tasks of the Project Leader

The Project Leader (PL) supported by the Junior PL (in case of a consortium) will direct, coordinate, and control the overall thrust of the project. He/she will guide the RTA in ensuring the achievement of the mandatory results and the implementation of the activities.

The Project Leader is expected to work a minimum of three days per month for the project from his/her home administration. In addition, he/she should join, from the Member State side, the Project Steering Committee, which will meet in Azerbaijan every three months.

Profile:

- At least 10 years of experience in the field of higher education in an EU MS, with at least 3 years in a senior managerial position;
- In-depth knowledge and experience with the implementation of the EHEA objectives/ Bologna process in a national HE system;
- Experience in the field of project management, institutional issues and organization in the field of higher education;
- Excellent command of English.

Tasks:

- Overall coordination, guidance and monitoring of the project;
- Preparation of project quarterly reports with support of the RTA;
- Co-chairing of PSC Meetings;
- Ensuring the achievement on time of the mandatory project results;
- Ensuring the availability on time of MS STEs and other MS resources.

3.5.2 Profile and tasks of the RTA

The RTA, under the guidance of the PL, will lead the work of the team and work on a daily basis with the RTA counterpart to implement the project, to support and co-ordinate the actions in the BC.

He/she is expected to ensure the achievement of the mandatory results, and may propose alternative and/or complementary project activities and/or outputs where necessary. Also he/she has to give an active contribution in the preparation of documentation necessary for all activities, and also to intermediate and final reports. The RTA will be responsible for the selection and supervision of the RTA Assistant and the management and performance of the short-term experts while in Azerbaijan.

The following profile is provided to give an indication of the types of skills, qualifications and expertise that is expected for the post.

Profile:

- University degree in a relevant discipline or at least 5 years of equivalent experience;
- At least 5 years of experience working as a senior manager in a Ministry of Education or equivalent structure or mandated body with specific experience and knowledge in the area of HE;
- Specific knowledge of best practices in the area of higher education;
- Knowledge of EU policies and legislation related to EHEA and Bologna process;
- Experience in planning and preparation of strategic documents and action plans in the area of HE;
- Excellent project management skills;
- Good interpersonal and management skills;
- Computer literacy;
- Excellent command of written and spoken English;
- Hands-on experience of the EHEA reforms would be an asset;
- Prior experience in the region, or in Central and Eastern Europe would be an asset.
- Working knowledge of Azerbaijani or Russian would be an asset.

Tasks:

- Overall supervision of the project implementation and coordination of all activities;
- Coordination of the activities of the team members in line with the agreed work plans to enable timely achievement of project results and outputs;
- Provision of technical input to the project whenever needed and provision of advice in her/his field of expertise;
- Liaising with MS and BC Project Leaders;
- Daily cooperation with and contact with BC RTA counterpart;
- Co-operation with the MS Project Leader in preparation of the project quarterly reports;
- Liaising with Programme Administration Office;
- Liaising with the EUD Project Manager;
- Liaising with other relevant projects and Azerbaijani institutions;
- Preparing, organising and coordinating STE missions.

It is planned that the RTA will provide 24 months input on site and will be based in the premises of the MoE.

3.5.3 Profile and tasks of the RTA assistant

The RTA assistant will help arrange logistics for the RTA and local arrangements for the short-term experts. In collaboration with the Azerbaijani administration the assistant will handle administrative arrangements for conferences, training, seminars, etc. including the provision of interpreters and the commissioning of translations.

Profile and tasks of the short-term experts

The short-term experts (STEs) shall assist the RTA in implementation of the expected project activities. They should have work experience and skills related to the project activities and will actively collaborate with the RTA and counterparts from MoE in order to cover the full range of expertise required by the project.

General requirements on STEs are the following:

- University degree in a relevant discipline or at least 5 years of equivalent work experience;
- at least 3 years' experience in the field of expertise;
- Good drafting skills and a record of comparative analytical work with a good knowledge of institutional set up in different countries of the EHEA
- Good interpersonal and communication skills;
- Computer literacy;
- Excellent command of written and spoken English;
- Working knowledge of Azerbaijani or Russian would be an asset.

A pool of potential trainers in various sector fields (to be determined in the Training Needs Analysis) linked to the Bologna process implementation will be required.

4 Institutional Framework

Azerbaijan has a highly centralised governance system for Higher Education.

The Cabinet of Ministers and the MoE govern the HE system. The Cabinet of Ministers decides the education strategy, supervises implementation of the Law on Education and the relevant legislative acts and documents, as well as defines the regulations for the establishment, restructuring and liquidation of higher education institutions. Moreover, the Cabinet of Ministers approves the list of qualifications, education regulations and rules. It also makes certain proposals on the development of the budget and funds for the development of education and defines state standards for education funding, as well as regulations for scholarship and salary payment. Financing is under the remit of the President's Office. The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan appoints university rectors.

The MoE is the central counterpart and beneficiary of the project, where the RTA will be based.

The MoE is the central executive body governing the education system of the country. It participates in the development and implementation of the state policy for education. The MoE is competent to develop standards for higher education (to be approved by the Cabinet of Ministers) and verify their implementation for all universities.

In the MoE, the Twinning project's consultations and cooperation will encompass all departments. Its particular focus should be on the Department for Science and Higher Education, the Department for State Education Reforms and Analysis⁴, the Department for Education Statistics and Quality Assurance, the 'Nostrification Unit' recently integrated in the Department for Internal Control, and the Department for Licensing and Legal Expertise.

⁴ A new department approved in March/April 2014 and soon to be staffed.

However, the structure of the MoE is presently in transition. Gradually its departments are restructured and/or newly created and old and new functions and responsibilities are attributed and reallocated. Further changes are under consideration by the MoE and Government. A snap shot organisation chart is attached in Annex.

There is a complex network of competent supervisory authorities and higher education institutions. The Twinning Project will extend assistance to a wider range of institutions related to the MoE in the implementation of the Bologna process.

Different line ministries have authority over the management of different specialised public universities (military, naval, security, tourism, agriculture, etc.). With a view to HE aspects related to employability, the qualifications framework, the social dimension and human resources development, the project will also be liaising with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and possibly the Ministry of Economy and Industry.

Only 20 (out of 55) universities are under direct MoE supervision.

Another important stakeholder is the State Commission on Student Admission (TQDK - SCSA), an independent body subordinated to the President of Azerbaijan Republic. It centrally organises admission exams for students at various levels of education to access the next higher level, beginning with primary school graduates and their admission to general secondary or VET education all the way through to higher education.

5 Budget

The total budget for this Twinning Project is Euro 1.3 million.

The Beneficiary Administration (BA) will provide premises and/or venues for workshops and trainings, the production of manuals, materials, handbooks etc.

6 Implementation Arrangements

6.1 Implementing Agency responsible for tendering, contracting and accounting (AO/CFCU/PAO/Commission), including contact person and full contact details.

The Delegation of the EU to Azerbaijan in Baku will be responsible for tendering, contracting, payments and financial reporting, and will work in close cooperation with the beneficiary. Its contact details are:

Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Azerbaijan

11th Floor, 90A Nizami Street

Landmark III, Baku

Phone: (+994 12) 497 20 63

Fax (+994 12) 497 20 69

Website: www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/Azerbaijan

The PAO will support the twinning project implementation process. Its contact details are:

Mr Ruslan Rustamli

Director

Department on Cooperation with International Organisations

Ministry of Economy and Industry of the Republic of Azerbaijan
6th floor, Government House, 84, Uzeyir Hajibeyov Str.
Tel: (+99412) 493 88 67 (21-12)
Fax: (+99412) 498 85 19
E-mail: r.rustamli@economy.gov.az

6.2 Main counterpart in the BC, including contact person and contact details. Also include RTA counterpart and the BC Project leader

The beneficiary of the project is the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan (MoE). The persons in charge at MoE are:

RTA Counterpart

Name: Mr Ilham HUMBATOV
Institution: Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Function: Leading Adviser of Student Support and Exchange Programs Unit, Science and Higher Education Department
Address: 49 Khatai Ave., Baku, AZ1008, Azerbaijan
Phone: +994 12 489 99 15
Fax: +994 12 489 99 15
Email: ihumbatov@edu.gov.az

Project Leader

Name: Mr Emin AMRULLAYEV
Institution: Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Job Title: Head of Unit on Quality Assurance, Department of Education Statistics and Quality Assurance
Address: 49 Khatai Ave., Baku, AZ1008, Azerbaijan
Phone: +994 12 496 06 64
Fax: +994 12 489 99 15
Email: emin.amrullayev@edu.gov.az

6.3 Contracts

One Twinning contract is foreseen for this project.

7 Implementation Schedule (indicative)

7.1 Launching of the call for proposals: August 2014

7.2 Start of project activities: April 2015

7.3 Project completion: April 2017

7.4 Duration of the execution period: 27 months (legal duration), with an implementation period of 24 months (start on arrival date of RTA).

8 Sustainability

To ensure that the achievements of the project (i.e. the mandatory results) remain as a permanent asset at the beneficiary, the twinning partners have to be aware of the absorption capacity of the Beneficiary Administrations (BAs), for example, of the number of staff at the relevant departments and their regular workload. The project is designed according to the needs and abilities of the BAs, which should be re-checked during the contracting phase. The recommendations and lessons learnt from previous projects should be taken into account.

Direct practical benefit from the project inputs for the actual tasks and work processes of the BAs should ensure sustainability. Therefore it is important that a large part of the BAs staff participates in project activities or is familiarised with their outcomes. It is recommended to promote the project actively within the BAs and encourage participation.

It is likewise important that the project outputs – policies, tools and roadmaps - are widely consulted and – once approved - disseminated among stakeholders and the academic community. Opportunities for reflection, consultation and dissemination should aim to improve a genuine understanding and ownership by those most affected by the reform's implications.

The achievements of the Twinning project (mandatory results) should be maintained as a permanent asset to the Beneficiary administration even after the end of the Twinning project implementation. This presupposes inter alia that effective mechanisms are put in place by the Beneficiary administration to disseminate and consolidate the results of the project.

The Twinning Project is likely to increase the current workload of the MoE. An appropriate number of staff should be assigned by the Ministry to support the project and the RTA.

This Twinning project is envisaged to include training activities. The BAs should ensure that a constant and coordinated re-training of staff takes place after the conclusion of the twinning project. Internal know-how-carriers and training capacities should be established from the beginning of the project via training-of-trainers and other measures.

The project should provide to the BAs in electronic form all training curricula and other materials that are used in training events and, where required by the BAs, they should be translated into Azerbaijani. The continuous updating of electronic media, such as websites and databases, after completion of project activities usually requires the nomination of a responsible person within the BAs.

At present, the BA has cooperation with several different donor agencies. For the EU Twinning project, it is of great importance to liaise with other donor-funded projects on a regular basis in order to avoid duplication of activities or conflicting policy advice.

9 Crosscutting issues (equal opportunity, environment, etc...)

Based on the principle of equality, participation in the project will be guaranteed on the basis of equal opportunity and without discrimination with special focus on promotion of gender equality, as well as inclusiveness. This encompasses that access to all levels of education and training in Azerbaijan is free of any discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, ethnic origin, religion and disability. A priority should be for Azerbaijan to comply with the commitments assumed in the framework of relevant international conventions dealing with these issues. This will be included in the Twinning contract as a joint responsibility of the MS partner and the BAs.

To protect the environment and save natural resources, this twinning project should in principle be based on a paperless work environment. This means, in particular, minimising paper use during project implementation through: use of e-mails, establishing a project website and electronic project database for the cooperation between partners.

10 Conditionality and sequencing

There is no conditionality for the project as the BA has shown strong ownership in the development of this project, and the Education Development Strategy is already in place.

In terms of sequencing, in general, the project will work in parallel with the preparation of the EU "Education Support Programme in Azerbaijan" and the WB project and must liaise closely.

In terms of sequencing of the activities in the project all project components are interlinked.

Component 1 must be carefully tuned with the activities and progress under components 3 and 4. It must build on national expertise developed through activities under the QA and QF results and will ideally involve one (legal) expert from Azerbaijan participating in component 3 and component 4 who received training/insight/expertise during the QA and QF activities. This is important for reasons of ownership and sustainability, but also because the legislative review should include more than the education law, e.g. relevant by-laws, statutes and other regulations of universities etc. At the same time the legislative review under component 1 must be carried out comprehensively for legislation relevant to QA and for the HE part of QF in Azerbaijan, since these action lines are intricately connected.

Component 3 can be carried out in parallel to component 4. However, it will be crucial that experts involved in both components' working groups are regularly informed of the other group's progress, keep track of developments and have the opportunity to meet in the course and frame of the project. Activities and results under component 3 will need to ensure reflection of the evolving QF in the QA standards, guidelines, procedures and roadmap, and vice versa.

The set of interventions under component 2 (aiming at institutional and individual capacities) should embrace the other 3 project components. It should seek to integrate the capacities developed in components 1, 3 and 4 as well as the developed roadmaps and recommendations in its outputs.

ANNEXES

(1) Logical framework matrix

(2) Organisation Chart of the Ministry of Education (snap shot April 2014)

(3) List of relevant Laws and Regulations

(1) Logical framework matrix

Support to the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan for further adherence of the national higher education system to the European Higher Education Area (AZ-ad-EHEA)		Programme name and number ENPI Annual Action programme 2011 Azerbaijan	[Cris number]
Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan		Contracting period expires:	Disbursement period expires:
		Total budget: 1.3 million EUR	
Overall objective	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
To further develop Azerbaijan's higher education system through integration in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).	Positive assessment made by external independent institutions on progress made in Azerbaijan's implementation of the Bologna Process; Positive progress as attested by the regular Azerbaijan country report, as of 2016; Increased mobility of students & teachers;	- ERASMUS+ reports - ENP AP Progress report Azerbaijan; - ENP AP implementation reports provided by the Government of Azerbaijan - National statistics;	Continuous political and institutional support to the EHEA goals; Political commitment to improving the HE system;
Project purpose	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
Increase the institutional capacities of the Ministry of Education and other key institutions of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the development of Bologna related policies and the full implementation of the EHEA objectives and reference tools	Established internal and inter-institutional coordination and consultation mechanisms across the sector Increased awareness of the EHEA objectives/Bologna Process Successful institution and programme accreditation	- Governmental decisions; - MoE reports - Project Quarterly progress reports	Timely project start; Full support and follow up by the MoE and relevant institutions;
Results	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
1. The legal and normative framework for HE is reviewed and concrete recommendations for adapting legislation relevant to	1.1. A comparative review of Azerbaijan's present legislation and the required framework; 1.2. List of needed revisions of the legal &	- Project reports - STEs reports - Proposals on amendments of the	Authorities and stakeholders endorse and support proposed revisions.

QA and the HE sections of the AzQF in Azerbaijan are developed.	<p>normative framework;</p> <p>1.3. Recommended texts of revised laws, decrees & bylaws;</p> <p>1.4. The recommended changes are endorsed by the Beneficiary</p>	<p>legal & normative framework</p> <p>- draft legal acts</p>	
2. The coordination & networking capacity of the MoE and relevant stakeholders is enhanced on the basis of good practice examples in the EHEA.	<p>2.1 Assessments of overall institutional set up, administrative processes and coordination mechanisms;</p> <p>2.2 Progress review of EHEA/Bologna reforms in Azerbaijan;</p> <p>2.3 Recommendations on institutional and administrative changes with organisation chart on coordination of EHEA reforms to ensure an efficient and participatory consultation;</p> <p>2.4 Increased professional efficiency in implementation of Bologna reforms and action lines in Azerbaijan by the relevant actors (Ministries, Centres and Agencies, HEIs, student unions, social partners, and other concerned institutions and bodies);</p> <p>2.5 Training and needs assessment prepared and training programme / strategy under way;</p> <p>2.6 An operational national Bologna Committee with annual work plan;</p> <p>2.7 National EHEA/Bologna reference website;</p> <p>2.8 Recommendations and roadmap for the</p>	<p>- Project Reports</p> <p>- Organisation chart</p> <p>- National Bologna/EHEA Committee Annual Plan</p> <p>- TNA report and training programme</p> <p>- MoE website</p> <p>- STEs reports</p>	

	<p>future EHEA compliant system and its endorsement by MoE;</p> <p>2.9 Communication strategy and improved public awareness of the Bologna process within the key institutions and among a wider public and support for EHEA reforms and benefits.</p>		
<p>3. The AzQF sections relevant for higher education are developed in line with the EHEA QF in cooperation with HEIs. A roadmap for the full implementation of the framework in higher education is developed</p>	<p>3.1 The AzQF sections relevant for higher education are in line with the overarching qualifications framework of the EHEA and suggested changes, if appropriate, submitted to authorities for approval.</p> <p>3.2 The AzQF attributes (an appropriate level of) skills, knowledge and competences for qualifications in all three cycles of higher education.</p> <p>3.3 The AzQF shows clear interface and pathways between levels and education strands (i.a. VET and higher education), especially with a view to level 5, which currently issues sub-bachelor diploma at colleges and further access to level 6.</p> <p>3.4 The capacity of Azerbaijani experts from government and higher education institutions is enhanced to implement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project reports - STEs reports - AZQF - Roadmap for development of doctoral degree programmes - Roadmap for the implementation of HE sections of AzQF - revised recognition regulations 	<p>Authorities and stakeholders agree with the HE-QF proposal and roadmap for its implementation, and allocate sufficient resources for successful implementation.</p>

⁵ The self-certification is a process by which the competent authorities of the country concerned verify that the national qualifications framework is compatible with the overarching EHEA Framework. The self-certification process should also include input from foreign experts. Once the self-certification process has been completed, self-certification reports should be published so that partners in the European Higher Education Area may access them. Self-certification reports submitted to the Bologna Secretariat and/or the Council of Europe. Detailed information is available at www.ehea.info.

	<p>and maintain the AzQF sections relevant for higher education and related tools.</p> <p>3.5 Universities are provided with a roadmap for the (further) development of doctoral degree programmes approved by the Ministry of Education.</p> <p>3.6 A roadmap for the AzQF implementation leading to successful self-certification⁵ is submitted for approval by authorities.</p> <p>3.7 The national QA system for HE refers to the AzQF sections relevant for higher education;</p>		
<p>4. Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in HE in Azerbaijan are developed in line with the European Standards and Guidelines for QA and tested with three HE institutions.</p>	<p>4.1 Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in HE in Azerbaijan are developed together with stakeholder institutions</p> <p>4.2 Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in HE in Azerbaijan are tested with three HEIs (test run of internal and external evaluation)</p> <p>4.3 Test run is analysed and results integrated in Standards and Guidelines and proposed roadmap.</p> <p>4.4 Experience and results of pilot exercise are documented, disseminated and discussed with stakeholder institutions such as ministries, other competent bodies, the academic community.</p> <p>4.5 Standards and Guidelines for Quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project reports - STEs reports - Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in HE - Trial run/test results analysis report - Roadmap for implementation of QA in HE - Dissemination papers - blueprint/model for an EHEA compatible QA Agency 	<p>Authorities and stakeholders agree on future mechanisms and procedures for institutional and/or program evaluation and accreditation in Azerbaijan and roadmap, and allocate sufficient resources for successful implementation.</p>

	<p>Assurance in HE in Azerbaijan are designed by the Ministry of Education and submitted to authorities for approval.</p> <p>4.6 A blueprint for an ENQA compatible QA Agency for HE in Azerbaijan is developed by the Ministry of Education and submitted to authorities for approval. It includes proposals for agency statutes, an agency organisation chart, job descriptions and profiles for agency staff, profiles for external reviewers (for external evaluation), the agency's and experts operating processes.</p> <p>4.7 A roadmap for the implementation of an EHEA compatible QA system and associated reforms is designed by the Ministry of Education and submitted for approval by authorities.</p>		
Activities	Means	Costs	Assumptions
0. Visibility actions			
0.1 Kick-off meeting			
0.2 Final conference			
1. The legal and normative framework for HE is reviewed. Concrete recommendations for adapting legislation relevant to QA and HE part of QF in Azerbaijan prepared			
1.1 Facilitate identification, translation and mapping of legislation (laws, by-laws, rules, decrees etc.) relevant for Bologna/EHEA and in particular to QA and AzQF sections relevant	RTA; STEs		Availability of competent national experts

for higher education			
1.2 Support the elaboration of concrete recommendations for adapting legislation relevant to QA and the AzQF sections relevant for higher education, and adherence to the EHEA , with detailed explanatory notes for the proposed revisions, for submission to decision making bodies along-side with the concrete proposal	RTA; STEs		
2. The coordination & networking capacity of the MoE and relevant stakeholders is enhanced on the basis of best practice examples in the EHEA.			
2.1 Progress review of EHEA/ Bologna reforms in Azerbaijan	RTA; STEs		
2.2 Based on comparison with best practices in similar administrative set up in EHEA, assess the present institutional set up within the MoE and in the related institutions, notably organisation chart, line of responsibilities and command, administrative processes, information and document circulation, the interaction between the Departments and Divisions directly concerned with the implementation of the Bologna process and other key institutions and partners, job classifications, internal and external information sharing, coordination and consultation mechanisms	RTA, STEs		

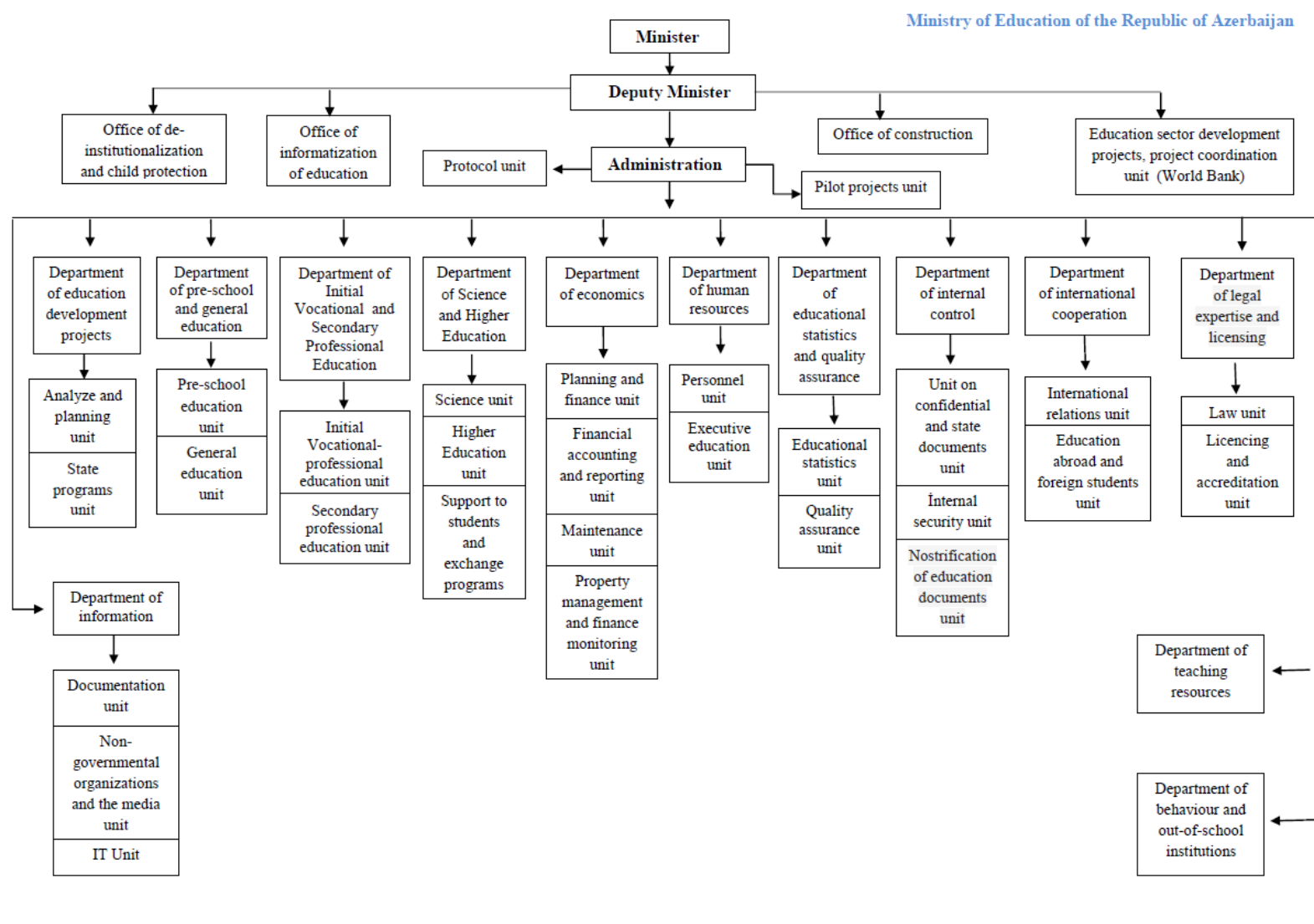
etc. and recommend improvements for the overall institutional architecture			
2.3 Facilitate the preparation of a medium-term work-plan/roadmap for further action with timelines, responsibilities and where appropriate an indication of required resources	RTA, STEs		Recommendations to improve the overall institutional, coordination and consultation architecture are agreed by MoE and Project Steering Committee.
2.4 Assist the relevant institutions to implement the recommendations including the establishment of appropriate steering, coordinating and training bodies and/or mechanisms, organising trainings, issuing rules and procedures etc.	RTA, STEs		
2.5 To conduct a training needs analysis (TNA) to identify priority areas where training will need to be performed. TNA and recommendations are submitted to the Beneficiary for approval.	RTA, STEs		
2.6 Organise a training programme and train experts to advise and consult the further implementation process of the EHEA in Azerbaijan within a functional domestic expert network including study tours to and/or internships in relevant institutions in the Twinning partner country for officials of the institutions con-	RTA, STEs		

cerned who are directly involved in the Bologna process implementation			
2.7 Assist in preparing a public awareness and communication strategy on Bologna/EHEA issues and its implementation	RTA, STEs		
3. The AzQF sections relevant for higher education are developed in line with the EHEA QF in cooperation with HEIs. A roadmap for the full implementation of the framework(s) in higher education is agreed			
3.1 Train/update the experts on the EHEA context, the QF EHEA, external reference points and EHEA trends and practice, mapping relevant rules, regulations and practice at HEIs in Azerbaijan by the working group members	RTA, STEs		
3.2 Facilitate a verification process of the AzQF against the overarching QF EHEA (gap analysis).	RTA, STEs		
3.3 Assist with the elaboration of a concrete proposal for aligning higher education qualifications and curricula with the framework for HE qualifications; Specific emphasis on the development of third cycle/doctoral degree programmes	RTA, STEs		
3.4 Facilitate the elaboration of a roadmap for the further implementation of the AzQF sections	RTA, STEs		Approval of proposal for alignment and roadmap by relevant authorities.

relevant for higher education (leading towards a successful self-certification) with a specific emphasis on a realistic development plan for doctoral degree programmes			
3.5 Facilitate the elaboration of a proposal for reflecting the HE part of the AzQF in Azerbaijan's recognition procedures and practice	RTA, STEs		
4. Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in HE in Azerbaijan are developed in line with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance. 3 institutions have undergone an internal and external evaluation (pilot).			
4.1 Train/update the experts on the EHEA context, the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA and EHEA trends and practice	RTA, STEs		
4.2 Facilitate the mapping of existing Quality Assurance and accreditation practice in Azerbaijan & carry out gap analysis and issue draft report and recommendations	RTA, STEs		
4.3 Assist with the elaboration of a concrete proposal for the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Azerbaijan	RTA, STEs		
4.4 Facilitate the elaboration of a roadmap for the further implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assur-	RTA, STEs		

<p>ance in Azerbaijan, leading towards full recognition of the QA system in Azerbaijan by ENQA and EQAR. Facilitate the incorporation of a blueprint/model for an EHEA compatible Quality Assurance Agency for HE in Azerbaijan in the roadmap. Submit roadmap and blueprint to the Project Steering Committee for approval</p>			
<p>4.5 Coordinate a trial/test run of these Standards and Guidelines with 3 HEIs in Azerbaijan. Decide on the feasible scope of the exercise (programme and institutional evaluation), number of programmes; to elaborate criteria and indicators for the test run, a report format</p>	<p>RTA, STEs</p>		
<p>4.6 Jointly analyse results of the trial and integrate in the proposal for the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance and roadmap. Ensure appropriate dissemination</p>	<p>RTA, STEs</p>		<p>Approval of proposals by relevant authorities.</p>

(2) Organisation Chart of the Ministry of Education (snap shot April 2014)



3. List of relevant Laws and Regulations (optional)

- a. [Education Law of the Azerbaijan Republic, 2009](#)
- b. [Rules of accreditation of educational institutions](#), Cabinet of Ministers Decision № 167; September 2010
- c. [Regulations on recognition and determination of equivalence of higher education specialities of foreign countries](#), Executive order of the Cabinet of Ministers № 64; May 2003
- d. Rules on organizing the credit system education at bachelor and master levels of higher education institutions, Cabinet of Ministers Decree № 348; December 2013
- e. [Rules for thesis preparation at the baccalaureate level of university](#), Executive order of the Ministry of Education 153; May 1997
- f. [Regulations on the state attestation of students of the higher education establishments of the Republic of Azerbaijan at the bachelor's degree level](#), Order of the Ministry of Education № 54; January 1997
- g. [Regulations for Master's degree preparation at the multi-tier higher education system of the Republic of Azerbaijan](#), Order of the Cabinet of Ministries № 15; February 1997
- h. [Regulations on procedures for preparation, presentation and defence of Master's Thesis](#), Executive Order of the Ministry of Education № 202; April 1998
- i. [Regulation on Specialized Scientific Councils for Master's Thesis Defence](#), Executive order of the Ministry of Education № 742; November 1998
- j. [Additions to the "List of higher educational institutions selected for the purpose of study of Azerbaijani youth abroad"](#), Executive order of the Cabinet of Ministers № 204; June 2008
- k. [Definition of the types of entrepreneurial activities that can be provided by educational institutions in order to receive the additional income](#), Decision of the Cabinet of Ministries № 10; January 2010

(4) Reference to relevant Government Strategic plans and studies (may include Institution Development Plan, Business plans, Sector studies etc.) (optional)

- a. [Key Priorities of Higher Educational Reforms to be implemented by the Ministry of Education](#); February 2014
- b. State Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan; October 2013
- c. [Azerbaijan 2020: Look into the future - Concept of development](#)
- d. [State program on reforms in the higher education system of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the 2009-2013 years](#)