

# **The SAAHE Thematic Analyses and Report Plan for 2022-2025**

Approved by the SAAHE Executive Board

In Bratislava, 3 February 2022

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The Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education processes according to Act no. 269/2018 Coll. thematic analyses of the development of the higher education system in the Slovak Republic, including analysis of internal evaluation reports concerning internal systems.

According to the Standards and Guidelines of the European Higher Education Area, the ESG agencies are to publish regular reports describing and analysing general conclusions of the activities external quality assurance (accreditation) activities.

According to the ESG Guidelines, in the course of their work, accreditation agencies gather information on study programmes and higher education institutions that may be useful beyond the scope of a specific procedure, thus providing material for a structures analysis of the entire higher education system. These findings can contribute to the analysis and improvement of quality assurance strategies and related processes at the level of higher education institutions as well as at the national and international levels.

During the period of transition to ESG accreditation, a period in which the Agency was still statutorily ESG accreditation was not possible, the Agency developed and published in 2021 the first thematic report of a broader nature:

- 1. Quantitative overviews of the development of Slovak higher education, 20 December 2021;**  
The report summarizes the thirty-year development trends in student, graduate, and teacher numbers of higher education institutions together with the demographic trends of 19-year-old citizens of the Slovak Republic. An alarming 45 % demographic decline threatens the future social and economic life in Slovakia and it is necessary to prepare for this development.
- 2. Changes in higher education due to the introduction of quality assurance systems 2019 - 2021, 30 December 2021;**  
The report summarizes the most important steps and systemic changes in higher education in the "transition period" in terms of quality. It provides factual information on the changes in the higher education environment from the adoption of the law, in particular on accreditation standards, accreditation itself, the introduction of internal rules in higher education institutions, to adjustments to study programmes offered by universities, or monitoring the views of students themselves.

Going forward, the Agency plans to produce analyses drawing on its activities, in particular evaluation reports, on an annual basis. These will analyse the most frequent, or the most serious problems faced by the Executive board review panels in the previous year. The analysis will also elaborate on the universities strengths and recommendations.

Thematic reports will also be prepared on specific topics, which will be refined according to current societal needs. The Agency also foresees the use of specialised tools, such as surveys in the field of higher education, to support opinion surveys on specific issues.

For the period from 2022 onwards, the Agency plans to produce the following thematic reports:

**1. The most important conclusions from the first accreditations of study programmes**

Evaluation of accreditations of study programmes applied for by universities in March 2021.

The thematic analysis focuses on the most frequent or most serious problems of higher education institutions arising from the 63 procedures carried out by the Agency on the basis of applications for accreditation of study programme by higher education institutions carried out in the period March 2021 – March 2022.

Deadline: 2nd quarter 2022

**2. Thematic report on the findings of the student opinion survey**

The thematic report summarizes the most significant findings from the student satisfaction survey conducted in May 2021 with a total of almost 20,000 respondents.

Deadline: 2nd quarter 2022

**3. Thematic report on a current topic**

The thematic analysis focuses on a specific current topic. It is expected that some of the conclusions of the accreditations will open up specific themes that will be the subject of specific analyses or investigations. We expect to publish their elaborations during the first half of the year 2023.

Deadline: 2nd quarter 2023

**4. The most important conclusions from the accreditation of study programmes in 2022**

Evaluation of accreditations of study programmes applied for by universities and implemented in 2022.

The thematic analysis focuses on the most frequent or most serious problems of higher education institutions arising from procedures carried out by the Agency on the basis of applications from the universities for the study programme implemented in 2022.

Deadline: 2nd quarter 2023

**5. The most important conclusions from the first compliance assessments of internal assurance systems of higher education institutions with the standards the quality assurance systems**

Evaluation of compliance assessments of the internal quality assurance systems of higher education institutions with the standards applied by higher education institutions by the end of 2022. This will be the first compliance assessment following the applicable law.

The thematic analysis focuses on the most frequent or the most serious problems of higher education institutions arising from the proceedings carried out by the Agency on the basis of applications from higher education institutions for the accreditation of the study programme implemented in 2022.

This will be one of the most important documents on the quality of higher education, drawing on evaluations of all universities in the Slovak Republic.

Deadline: 2nd quarter 2024

#### **6. Thematic report on a current topic**

The thematic analysis focuses on a specific current topic. It is expected that some of the conclusions from the compliance assessments of internal quality assurance systems for higher education will raise specific topics that will be the subject of specific analyses or investigations. We expect to publish their elaboration in 2024.

Deadline: 4th quarter 2024

#### **7. The most important conclusions from the accreditation of study programmes in 2023 and 2024**

Evaluation of accreditations of study programmes applied for by universities and implemented in 2023 and 2024.

The thematic analysis focuses on the most frequent or most serious problems of higher education institutions arising from the procedures carried out by the Agency on the basis of applications from higher education institutions for study programme accreditation carried out during the period.

Deadline: 2nd quarter 2025

#### **8. Thematic report on a current topic**

The thematic analysis focuses on a specific current topic. It is expected that some of the conclusions from the previous period's accreditations will open up specific topics that will be the subject of specific analyses or investigations. We expect to publish their elaboration in 2025.

Deadline: 4th quarter 2025

#### **9. The most significant findings from the supervision of compliance with the internal system standards**

The Agency will carry out the first intermediate supervision of compliance with the internal system standards during 2025. The analysis of the most serious findings will be published subsequently during 2026.

Deadline: 2nd quarter 2026

This plan of thematic analyses was approved at the meeting of the Executive Board of the Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education on 3 February 2022. The Agency may modify the plan accordingly.