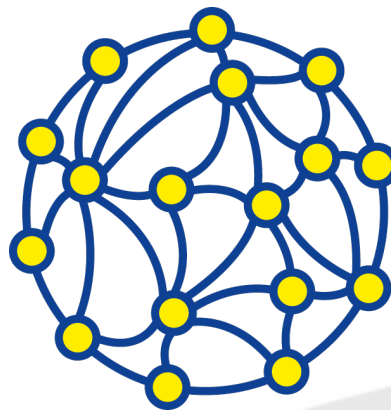


vluhr

Quality Assurance



EUnIQ

Lessons learned from the pilots

Patrick Van den Bosch - VLUHR QA

EUnIQ Pilots Online Conference - 9 March 2021 - qualityassurance.vluhr.be

An external evaluation



- Roadmap Group
- Resonance Group
- Project coordinator meetings

- Peer Support & Kick-off Event (Rome, October 2019)
- Training day for pilots (Brussels, March 2020)
- Peer Support & Feedback Event (Online, March 2021)

- Documents, reports, observations, surveys
Focus groups:
 - On 3 February with 7 panel members
 - On 3 February with 7 representatives of the alliances
 - On 4 February with 8 process coordinators

Analysis

- Preparation
- Panel
- Site visit
- Report

Observations

- Aim of the pilot
- Timing
- Framework
- Role of the process coordinator

Aim of the pilot

- Thorough preparation
 - Preparatory events
 - Resonance and roadmap group meetings
 - On time delivery of well-designed documents
- Project deliverables are met
- Information to prepare for the evaluation



Aim of the pilot



- Peer Support & Kick-off Event (October 2019)
 - Participants satisfied
 - Many new insights
 - A little too early in time
 - Objective of the event (produce a draft framework)
 - Successful first phase that needs further fine-tuning
 - Ownership of the framework will have to be worked on in the near future
 - Scope not fully clear
 - Framework for the pilot versus a final framework
 - Fear for binding standards

Aim of the pilot

- Enhancement-led?
- Accountability?
- Replacing institutional evaluation / national systems?

- Evaluation of the alliance?
- Evaluation of the potential of the alliance?
- Evaluation of the EC project

- Clear scope at the start needed
 - Training of panels
 - Preparatory meeting alliance

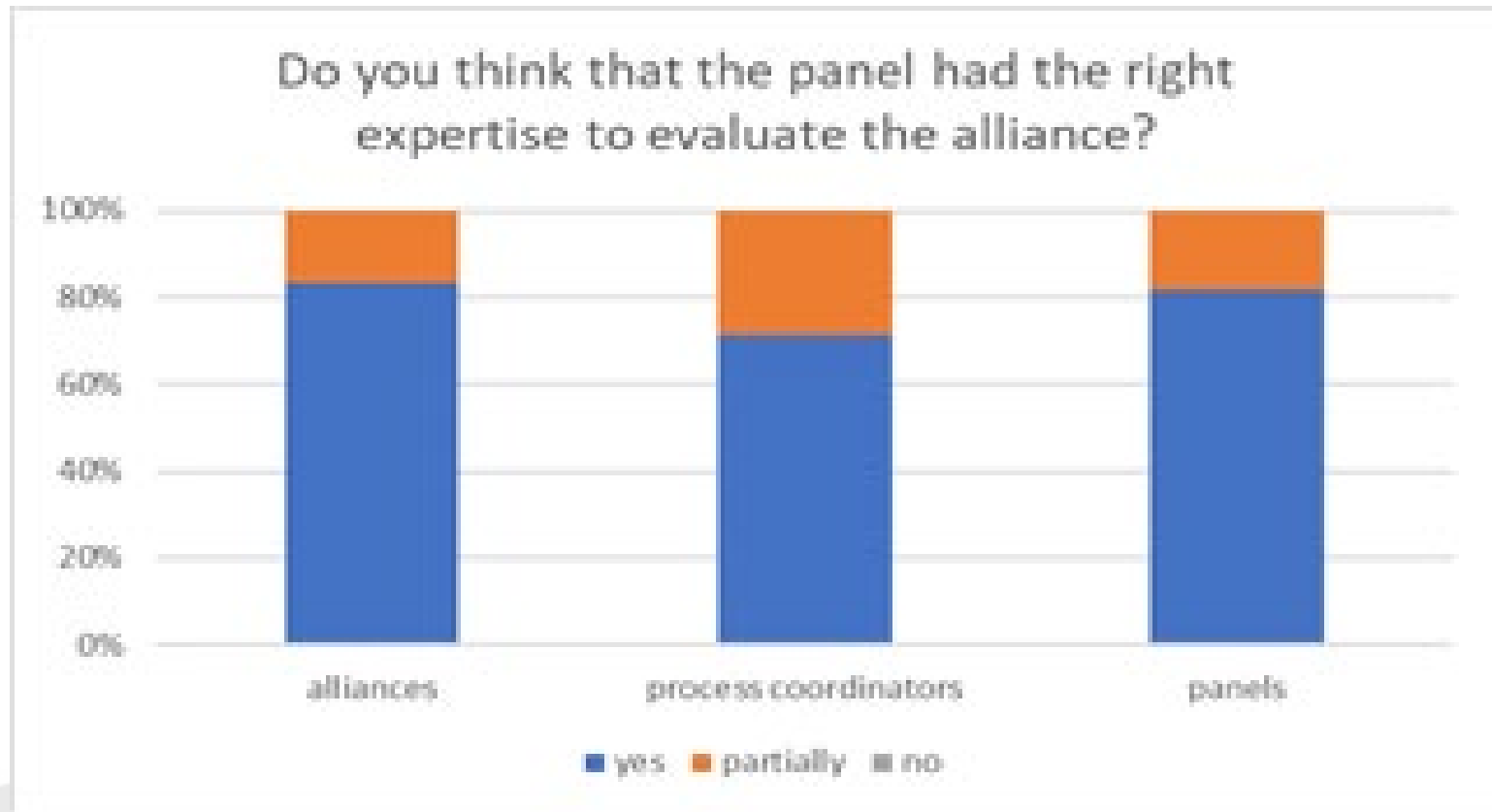
- Sustainability of the alliance

- Evaluation almost coincided with the launch of the alliance
 - few results to be observed
- Position of the alliance at time of providing information
 - Requested information was already present in the document portfolio
 - Start from scratch
- Too early?
 - Zero measurement with a co-creative approach
 - Continuous monitoring

- Postponed: positive impact
 - Prepare more thoroughly for the site visit
 - Clarify the scope of the site visit
- Online
 - (Lack of) body language
 - No travels
 - Cost-effective
 - Nature of the alliances
- Future: Hybrid? On-site visit + online visit
 - spreading in time; several meetings over several months
 - More reflection time
 - More in depth

- Focus on education?
- Focus on all elements that bind an alliance?
- ESG-based?

- Framework criteria applicable in this early stage of development of the alliance
- Framework meant to evaluate a running QA system rather than a project still to be implemented



- Report
 - Not public
 - Summaries on project website
 - Source of inspiration for the further development of the European Universities
 - Agree on the findings, conclusions and recommendations
 - Easy to write
 - still in an early stage
 - many aspects still under development
 - Difficult to get a grip on what could be really meaningful for the alliance
 - more detailed recommendations, required other evaluation processes and input

- A sound and operational framework
- Variety of alliances: tailor-made approach of the framework
 - Flexibility has to be made explicit in the framework
 - Continuous dialogue between panel and alliance
- Potential of the framework is not fully been exploited

A more open discussion on expectations from both sides at the start of the evaluation is welcome. From that starting point, it could be decided what the nature of the framework should be.

Process coordinator



- Two process coordinators
 - Interesting experience
 - No examples to built on
 - Training for panels (and coordinators)
 - Cultural differences
 - Appreciative approach
 - Secretary of the panel
- QA-person of the panel => panel member
- Good guidance by project coordinator

- Knowledge and competences
 - Experienced QA-person
 - Broad knowledge HE-systems in the EHEA
 - Diplomatic skills
- A toolkit for process coordinators
- Make one agency responsible for the process coordination

Preliminary recommendations

- Clarify the objective of the evaluation of the alliances
- Reflect on the cost-benefit ratio of a physical or an online site visit
- Consider spreading the evaluation more in time
- Consider continuous external monitoring
- The framework does not need a significant update, but make it more flexible for the diverse alliances
- Use the full potential of the framework

Preliminary recommendations

- Make reports public
- Share the substantive good practices identified by the panel
- Make one agency responsible for the process coordination
- Provide a training / toolkit for panels
- Provide a toolkit for alliances
- Provide a training / toolkit for process coordinators

Preliminary conclusions



- Project deliverables are met
- In the end, all involved are satisfied with the results
- Areas for improvement detected in the pilots
- Decisions to be made on policy level, taking into account the results of the pilot and continuous dialogue with all stakeholders
- Sharing of expertise is a must

Overall, we were satisfied with the outcome of the EUniQ site visit. This was due to the fact that contact with the EUniQ project management was excellent and we were able to schedule several meetings over several months to present, discuss and understand each other. This would not have been possible during one site visit.

It was not clear at the beginning how to discuss a framework for European Universities, which has not yet been defined. Nor did many of our colleagues really understand the EUniQ framework, which should be the starting point for discussion. Dialogue and reflection time was required on both sides.

(Conclusion alliance representative in pilot survey.)