Quality Assurance to support the social dimension of HE – Conclusions (1)

General considerations:

- Social dimension (SD) often addressed in different areas of legislation: discrimination, equity, gender equality, sexual harassment, support to underrepresented and/or vulnerable groups and migrants/refugees, (only) some aspects covered by HE legislation (e.g. admission, RPL, student support),…

- National strategies on SD, e.g. on widening access and supported participation, seldom refer explicitly to QA, but can be monitored through other mechanisms.

- SD explicitly or implicitly addressed by other bodies, role of QA and of QA agencies often unclear.

- SD principles (cf. *Principles and Guidelines*) may be included in the framework, but not all specifically monitored by QA. The principles could lead to a more systematic approach on national level.

- SD may be linked to HEI funding (use of indicators).

- NGOs may play a role as source of knowledge on aspects of SD.

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Quality Assurance to support the social dimension of HE – Conclusions (2)

- **When addressed by external QA**: often reliance on strong internal QA processes at HEIs to monitor and deal with SD

  - Criteria e.g. on student environment, resources, accessibility, psychological support, career counselling

  - Less often related to access, recognition, RPL etc.

- Inclusivity in QA agencies' methodologies, e.g. assessment panels? Gender, usually considered; other aspects of SD, more seldom.

- **QA-FIT survey results:** SD might need to be more explicitly addressed by external QA, as dimensions not assessed by QA agencies may not be monitored by other bodies/mechanisms. At the same time, SD often already partly included in QA, implicitly covered by other assessment areas, or explicitly addressed particularly in relation to students' rights and support.

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