

Quality Assurance Practices in Croatian Academic Libraries: Two Case-Studies

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Abstract

Higher education in the Republic of Croatia has been going through transformative changes ever since the introduction of the Bologna process. The Bologna process in Europe was introduced with the intention to ensure the more comparable, compatible and coherent systems of higher education and one of the extremely important elements of this process is the focus on quality. In Croatia, it was recognized that the higher education institutions need to continuously work on the quality improvement of their educational programs. This need motivated the introduction of the external assessment instrument – both of the educational programs (in the form of the initial and consequent reaccreditation procedures) and the quality assurance systems developed at the institutions of higher education. The Bologna process has also recognized academic libraries as important factors of the higher education institutions' educational and research excellence. Croatian academic libraries have become more proactive in finding ways to align quality practices with the overall mission and goals of the university. This paper investigates the quality initiatives of two Croatian academic libraries – Library of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Osijek and Zadar University Library, focusing on their methodology and strategic planning.

Keywords: academic libraries, quality assurance, strategic planning, Bologna process, Croatia

1 Introduction

Higher education in the Republic of Croatia, as in many other EU countries, has been going through transformative changes ever since the introduction of the Bologna process. As the Bologna process in Europe was introduced with the primary intention to ensure the more comparable, compatible and coherent system of higher education, one of the extremely important elements of this process has been the focus on quality.

Assessment is a vital tool in a manager's tool kit as are quality and operation control (Evans, Alire, 2013). There is no state, regional or local governmental authorities that will accept the financial report of a public institution without the data on its accountability. Even business sector takes into account the importance of promoting quality assurance (QA) in non-profit sector, especially in HE area (Drljača, 2014) expecting that this will raise the competency level of their future employees. Furthermore, the founding bodies will seek the qualitative data as it is the case in the processes of accreditation or reaccreditation of HE institutions. In that respect, accrediting bodies have produced standards and guidelines, which include requirements related to learning outcomes, staff competencies and student/teacher ratio as well as the proofs of scientific excellence, to mention a few of the most important ones.

In Croatia, the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (2010) which regulates, among other issues, "quality assurance and development in science and higher education via procedures of initial accreditation, re-accreditation, thematic evaluation and audit", opened up the processes of accreditation/reaccreditation with QA as one of the most important procedures for HE institutions. The need to continuously work on the quality improvement of HE institutions motivated the introduction of the external assessment instrument – both of the educational programs (in the form of the initial and consequent reaccreditation procedures) and the quality assurance systems developed at each HE institution.

Academic libraries have been seen for centuries as an important driving force in the accomplishment of the purpose and goals of HE institutions. The better the library performs, the more likely the users are to return. (cf. Evans, Alire, 2013). Therefore, the relation between the university's excellence and the quality of library performance has been recognized by many authorities worldwide. There is no doubt that the Bologna process recognized academic libraries as important factors of the HE institutions' educational and research excellence. Croatian academic libraries have become more proactive in finding ways to align quality practices with the overall mission and goals of the university.

2 The quality assurance issues in higher education

The Bologna reform led to an in-depth reform of the higher education system in many European countries and provided impetus for national standards and guidelines which served as criteria for obligatory institutional/program accreditation by external bodies. Since 2000 the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) has been promoting European cooperation in the field of QA in higher education. Among its responsibilities is the design and distribution of standards and guidelines that would support the quality in the European HE area (Standards, 2015). QA is a generic term that embraces narrowly defined regulatory requirements and good practice under a common umbrella of diverse European local contexts. The basic principles guiding internal quality assurance strategies are: a) responsibility of universities for internal quality assurance; b) encouragement of internal quality culture, diversity and innovation; c) efficient organizational structures; d)

transparency; e) accountability for public and private funding; f) inclusion of general social and individual learners' interests in the quality of higher education. (cf. Gvaramadze, 2008)

In Croatia the process of structural reform of educational programs involves three levels of authority: control by the state; external assessment and control by the accreditation system; and implementation and quality assurance by the management of the HE institutions.

The approach to the QA issues in HE institutions experienced up to now a number of critical studies that mainly relate to the following issues: a) QA system is complex; b) detailed accreditation criteria lead often to misunderstandings; c) varying interpretations create a need for counseling, which is quite difficult to get; d) additional resources necessary to underpin the reform were not granted; e) costs for preparing documentation for program accreditation are high; f) efforts spent in preparation are perceived by academics involved as enormously time consuming; g) benefit/cost ratio is estimated to be small by many of the reform managers.(cf. Suchanek, 2012).

Although critical observation on the success of "Bologna process" indicate that the review of the achievements as well as of the failures should be carried out in each of the countries involved, it is obvious that HE libraries have made a significant step forward in embracing the QA.

2.1 The changes in quality assurance practices in academic libraries

In academic libraries environment the assessment was defined as documenting "observed, reported, or otherwise quantified changes and attitudes and skills" (Hernon, Dugan and Schwartz, 2006) by library users, students and teachers/researchers primarily. These investigations have been usually carried on by researchers or professionals interested in management of change or design of standards that will encourage the high level of performance. Traditional ways of looking at planning was directed towards inputs, processes and outputs. Today, since the academic libraries are exposed to the critical observations of accreditation agencies and their expert' teams, according to Evans experience, accrediting agencies would like to become familiar with libraries' plans and processes they employ to carry out relevant QA activities (Evans, Alire, 2013). Among the most important issues are: library's goals in relation to the university's goals, how the learning outcomes correspond with library collection management policy, is the library with its services an optimal support for learning outcomes, etc.

A wise academic library's management would seek to select the best possible approach in QA procedures of the whole HE institution to prove the importance of the investment in and development of library services. From the other side, QA procedures provoke the academic library to meet the requirements of the external body appointed to evaluate the performance of the university observed and all its parts with a special attention towards the vision and mission statements, plans and procedures. The ENQA standards and guidelines (Standards, 2015) recommend that besides the teachers, students should be provided with a range of resources that vary from physical resources such as libraries or computing facilities to personal support in the form of tutors, counselors, and other advisers. Learning resources and other support mechanisms such as ICT play an important role in the process of education and they should strive to constantly improve their services.

From the professional point of view, the library management will tend to examine a) how well the library meets professional standards, b) how efficiently library services are delivered c)

what is the perception of users and the level of their satisfaction with library services. In all, today's assessment tools tend to be holistic in approach in contrast to the traditional ones that preferred professional standards as a main referral point.

Some research shed light upon another area where academic library should play more active role: the ranking. In studying the QA of universities some fifteen indicators were detected – the students' assessment of the organization of the program, mentoring by professors, libraries, laboratories and IT resources, to name a few. Most indicators are based on quantitative measures (for libraries, for example, the availability of books, opening hours, service, access to electronic journals, etc.) or close relation between the course design and the number of available documents per student from the obligatory reading list, including the availability of online resources. (cf., for example, research carried out in Germany – Federkeil, 2008).

Furthermore, the Bologna process introduced the new and stricter rules about the library collection coverage of the course reading lists. Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education prescribed that the academic library should possess 20% of all the titles on the obligatory reading lists of the number of students enrolled in the course, and 10% of the titles on the optional reading lists, indicating the importance of library services for the quality of university performance.

3 Quality assurance and change management practices in two Croatian academic libraries – two case studies

3.1 Methodology

The methodology used in this paper is a qualitative case-study approach which allows a researcher to closely examine the data within the specific context (Zainal, 2007). Although case study methods offer, for some authors, controversial data collection approaches, they are widely recognized in many social studies. Case study approach is mostly used in the area of social sciences, in particular in the fields of education (e.g. Gulsecen, Kubat, 2006), sociology (Grassel, Schirmer, 2006) and community-based problems (Johnson, 2006).

Our paper focuses on the quality assurance efforts of two academic libraries of two medium-sized Croatian universities, one traditional (Osijek University) and one integrated (Zadar University). The representative of the Osijek University is the Faculty library (the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences) and the representative of the Zadar University is the University Library. Those two universities were chosen as universities of the different size and structure whose libraries have responded well to the challenges of the Bologna process regarding the quality policy.

3.2 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Osijek Library

The Library of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FHSS) in Osijek is an academic library that operates as a separate unit within the FHSS with the purpose to ensure that its users have the highest quality conditions for their educational and scientific work (Pravilnik, 2014).

The FHSS library was founded in 1961 with the foundation of the Teacher Training College. During the course of 54 years of the Faculty's existence, it changed name and its internal structure several times. In 1977 it grew into the Faculty of Education, only to change its name

into the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in 2004. Each change of name resulted in the change of its internal structure and studies that were offered, and, consequently, it all affected the content of library collections.

Today, the library collections consist of approximately 65.000 catalogued books and other library materials, and close to 750 titles of domestic and foreign periodicals. Next to the book collections, the library offers access to 38 databases subscribed for all Croatian academic libraries by the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sport (those databases range from technical, biotechnical, natural, medical, social sciences to humanities) (Centar, 2015), but it also subscribes to additional six databases on its own (Project Muse, Cambridge Journals Online, Library and Information Science Source, PsycARTICLES, PsycBOOKS, Emerald Insight). At the moment, the FHSS offers nine study programs: English language and literature, German language and literature, Croatian language and literature, Hungarian language and literature, Philosophy, Information sciences, History, Pedagogy, and Psychology. Understandably, the library collections reflect the Faculty's study programs.

The library serves the primary user population in between 1000 and 1400 FHSS students and approximately 130 FHSS teachers. Next to them, the library also caters to the user population that consists of all the students and teachers of the Osijek University, as well as the local high-school students and FHSS alumni. Also, the library's services can be used by anyone from Croatian academic and research community.

Physically, library is situated on two locations (two different floors), which makes it difficult for provision of a service of a desired quality level. The library space is only 338 square meters which is completely insufficient for the library's needs (the situation is especially bad with the collection storage rooms). Furthermore, as already mentioned, this space is further divided between the Foreign languages library (88 square meters) which serves those whose disciplines are English, German and Hungarian languages, and the Central library (255 square meters) which covers the rest of the disciplines. Although the Foreign languages library has a small reading room, it is cramped and can be noisy, and therefore unpopular. The main reading rooms are at the Central library: the reading room for group work and the (quiet) reading room for individual work. Since the problem with the library space is becoming more pressing with time, the faculty management has decided to start working on a building project for an additional building where library will be granted the whole first floor (approximately 1000 square meters).

Quality assurance and change management activities

The FHSS library has always been dedicated to the high quality performance, but the introduction of the Bologna process has motivated the library to start planning the gradual improvement of its service quality, and thinking of the ways to measure and report about it, as well as demonstrate its value and worth to the stakeholders. Several areas of library service were affected by the planned change management activities of the library administration. Those areas are: strategic documentation, collections, services, physical premises, and users.

Focus on the quality that was intensified by the Bologna process, as well as the consequent assessments of quality (both external and internal) in the area of Croatian HE made the FHSS library administration aware that all the changes that should promote and improve the library's service quality should start with the construction of basic strategic documents. First and foremost, the library had to create a vision and mission statement in which it described its purpose and emphasized the importance of maintaining the high quality services. After the creation of the mission statement, the library created the strategic development plan for the period between 2010-2015 (now in a process of a revision) in which it specified several

strategic areas that library envisions as the most important elements of its service, and therefore areas which need a constant investment and monitoring. Next, a number of guidelines and books of regulations were created (for acquisitions, donations, interlibrary loan, on the use of computers and the Internet access, etc.) in order to secure the undistracted flow of everyday operations. The FHSS library's intention to raise the quality of its service motivated it to seek close cooperation with the institution's Quality Office as well as the Quality Board. Consequently, at the end of each year the head of the library sends the annual quality report to the Quality Office where it describes in which ways the library raised the quality of its performance in the previous year. Also, the library's intention to conduct a triennial user satisfaction survey is included in the FHSS quality manual (Priručník, 2011:22). The FHSS administration, as well as, both, the Quality Office and the Board perceive the library as the institutional unit dedicated to quality improvement and therefore do not interfere with either the user questionnaire formulation or the data analysis and interpretation. The library had earned this reputation through its continuous efforts to raise the quality of its services which had been initiated even before the Quality Office and Board started thinking about collecting data about the user satisfaction of various services within the FHSS¹.

Another area that experienced the change of management in order to raise the level of library quality service is the library collections and the organization of information. One of the library's goals was to increase the access to information for library users, which required, among other things, the rearrangement of library collections. Next to that, the library started making plans for retrospective subject cataloging of library materials, as well as retrospective cataloging of articles and component parts. Although the access to online databases has been improved, the database log analysis data, together with the data obtained through the citation analysis of the students' undergraduate papers, show that students do not use the online databases in the desired degree. The service of interlibrary loan further increased the access to information for both students and the faculty. However, the analysis of interlibrary loan requests revealed that, again, students use this library service in far less degree than the faculty (e.g. in 2013 students' interlibrary loan requests were only 3% of all the requests made that year). These unfavorable results motivated the library to start thinking of the ways to raise these numbers, such as intensive marketing of these two aspects of library service, and closer coordination with the faculty, who have the biggest influence on students' information behavior.

Following the rules about the library collection coverage of the course reading lists, the FHSS library started analyzing their collections against the course reading lists in 2010, and has been doing that ever since². Needless to say, the results of this analysis have greatly modified and influenced the library acquisition policy.

¹ The FHSS Registrar Office, on the other hand, did not think about quality improvement and/or collecting the data about the user satisfaction at all. As a consequence, the first user satisfaction instrument was drafted, analyzed and interpreted by the Quality Board, and the findings were not altogether positive for the Registrar Office. Even the quality manual included the paragraph which says that in future, user satisfaction surveys are organized by the Quality Office, which is also in charge for the data analysis and interpretation of the results (Priručník 2011:19).

² Since this type of analysis, as well as, the previously mentioned, citation analysis of students' papers, are extremely time consuming, the library has asked the Department of Information Sciences at the FHSS for assistance and those tasks have, for several years now, been performed by the final year graduate students of information sciences, within their obligatory and credited course entitled Pilot-project.

One of the biggest problems of the FHSS library is its chronic lack of space. During the last few years, the library undertook several rebuilding projects, but they were mostly of cosmetic nature, and library could not really obtain the badly needed space, but only repurpose the old space they had. With the Bologna, the more attention was given to the electronic services: the library has an OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue) and currently is in the process of negotiation with the FHSS administration about the complete computerization of library activities; more and more online databases are being subscribed and as from the Autumn 2014 the FHSS went wireless, which meant that the library services were available to all library users (especially students) with laptops or hand-held mobile devices, regardless whether they are within library premises, or somewhere else at the FHSS.

Probably the biggest change in relation to the pre-Bologna library services was the continuous and planned effort to raise the quality of user services. The FHSS library has always conducted a regular user-education but in the past it was neither planned nor structured or formalized in any way. With the Bologna reform students become active components of the educational process and are expected to be more independent in their learning process and one of the first steps toward this independence is the ability to find, evaluate, and ethically use the necessary information sources. The FHSS library has therefore put a significant emphasis on the user information literacy and has organized the information literacy workshops ever since the academic year 2010/2011. After the initial drawbacks, the workshops are now organized in cooperation with the faculty which ensures students' attendance. The library reaches between 20-30% of FHSS population through these workshops (Balog, Siber, Plaščak, 2013:562) and the next step is to offer the elective course entitled 'Information Literacy' at the level of Osijek University which would be carried out by the assistant professor at the Department of Information Sciences and two FHSS librarians.

One of the ways to assess the usefulness of these information literacy classes is undoubtedly, besides the exit satisfaction survey, the citation analysis of student papers. The citation of undergraduate student final papers have been carried out ever since the academic year 2009/2010 and shows gradual raise of the quality of information sources students use for writing their final papers (e.g. the usage of the Internet and Web resources, being the least reliable, has dropped from 55.89% in academic year 2009/2010 to 24.18% in academic year 2012/2013) (Čičak, Đurđević, 2013:38).

Also, when it comes to user services, one of the very important ways to collect user opinion is user satisfaction survey which the library initiated first (as a result of their strategic plan to continually raise the service quality) in 2010. As already said, the library has decided to conduct this user satisfaction survey every three years and so far there have been two surveys. These surveys give the library the badly needed evidence for the user perception of their service, as well as the indication of areas that need attention. Also, the findings of this survey is an excellent negotiation tool with the FHSS administration because the library now can support their claims (e.g. for new computers, more space, etc.) with valid data obtained through anonymous surveys. In addition to this periodical user survey, the library has opinion boxes scattered across the library premises where users can leave their comments any time, and do not have to wait for three years to pass to express their opinion.

3.3 Zadar University Library

Zadar University Library (ZUL) was founded in 1956, as a part of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Split. Its location moved several times within the main University building due to the rapid growth of its collections and the increase in the number of users, but at the

beginning of the 1980's the Central branch of the University library settled in its current premises. The University library, however, grew with the University so in 2002, when the Croatian Parliament passed an act allowing for founding of the University of Zadar as an independent university, the Library already had four branch locations in addition to its Central branch. Nowadays, the Zadar University library numbers ten branches. For the small University such is the University of Zadar, the library in ten locations presents somewhat of an operational issue, as it is a challenge to provide the consistency of service on so many locations.

University of Zadar library serves the community of about 5000 students and 450 faculty and staff. Through the interlibrary loan and other services the library can serve anyone from Croatian academic community.

The Library collections presently exceed 122,000 volumes (monographs and periodicals). They primarily serve the needs of the University's undergraduate and graduate students, as well as the teachers, researchers and scientists. In addition to 97,000 volumes of national and international monographs and about 25,000 volumes of periodicals, the library also holds a manuscript collection of around 900 volumes – master's and doctoral dissertations written at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zadar (The University of Zadar) and the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb. Aside from the print collections, like in the FHSS library in Osijek the ZUL library offers access to the electronic databases through the consortial subscriptions for all Croatian academic libraries provided by the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sport. Additionally, Zadar University library subscribes to several JSTOR collections. The majority of the collections are located at the Central Library and the rest is in the nine branch libraries and one depository location. The Library is structured according to the needs of the study programs. The collections contain the literature in the areas of English language and literature, Anthropology, Archeology, Economics, Philosophy, Geography, German Studies, Information Sciences, Classical Philology, Nursing, Pedagogy, Agriculture, Maritime Studies, Art History, History, Theology, Transportation, Psychology, Romance Studies, Slavic Studies, Sociology, and Tourism.

Quality assurance and change management activities

Considering the University of Zadar integrated nature and its relatively small size the institutional strategic documents, at the time of their writing, appeared to be sufficient and applicable to the University library, especially because the University of Zadar Development Strategy specifically addresses the important library issues. In the process of creating the University strategy library staff were consulted and their input was taken into the account and included in the document. The part of the Development Strategy of the University of Zadar that deals with the library states: The University library will continue to evolve as the information center of the University. While providing the traditional, printed sources of information, the University library will strive to provide the best possible access to electronic information resources to and to create and give access to the new electronic content through the online University bibliography and institutional repositories. These activities should be maintained and further developed. (Strategija, 2011). Furthermore, the Development strategy of the University of Zadar specifies two broad tasks for the library to complete in the given five year period. One was to build the institutional repository and create the environment for the digitization of the University's scientific production, as well as to offer bibliometric analysis services to researchers and staff at the University. The other task was to provide the infrastructure for teaching the Information Literacy class. Another University wide document that addresses the quality, albeit very broadly, is the Quality Policy of the University of Zadar

which states that the main purpose of quality assurance is the enhancement of the quality of scientific, instructional, and all other activities among the University of Zadar's entire academic community (Politika, 2012).

It is evident that the University of Zadar has set solid policies regarding the quality assurance, and its commitment to excellence is clearly stated in its strategic documents. In these documents Library is not only mentioned but given specific tasks and before it are set clear goals. However, there is a glaring disconnect when it comes to the execution and assessment of these policies. So even though the library is included in the Development Strategy and specific tasks were assigned there is no follow up in terms of the action plan, funding, continuous monitoring of quality indicators, or assessment. There is insufficient demand from the academic environment for measuring library service quality. The process of accreditation, re-accreditation and the various external audits and evaluations are yet to develop the effective ways to assess the quality of library services adequately and in depth. A part of the responsibility surely lays in the feedback from the audited libraries to the accrediting agencies. It has become apparent that in order to meet the level of excellence outlined in the Development Strategy University of Zadar the library needs to develop a Quality assurance system of its own. Naturally, these policies need to comply with the University Development Strategy, its mission, etc. but ought to be specific to the library. Once the library sets all its policies, strategies and the internal quality assurance procedures it will become a more valuable partner to the accrediting agencies in assessing the quality of services.

The first step in developing the Zadar University Library quality assurance system was to create a mission statement that will reflect the library's purpose. The mission statement of the University of Zadar Library is fairly broad and it stresses the importance of the provision of access to all available information sources relevant for the University community, as well as the the provision of all library services in support of education, research and teaching (Poslanje, 2015). The next step was to define its goals. Some of the goals of the University of Zadar library are: to be the information center of the University, to collect, keep, organize and provide access to library and other information sources, and to actively participate in the processes of learning and knowledge creation (Poslanje, 2015). The following step was to develop and revise some of the manuals, rules and regulations, flowcharts and other library documents that facilitate, organize and streamline the library operation. The final steps are to create library's own Development Strategy, 2015 – 2020 and to develop the quality assessment tools.

On this track in March of 2013 and, a year later, in March of 2014 Zadar University library conducted a survey on library user satisfaction. The findings indicate that ZUL users' perception of the quality of library services is mostly consistent, or slightly improving, namely in the areas of electronic services (Ispitivanje, 2014). The answers to open-ended questions provided the valuable information on the possible ways of improving the library services and library environment. However, it was decided that the questionnaire for the next year should be redesigned in order to better reflect the varying conditions and environment issues that affect the library service at varying locations such as the issues of noise, open shelving, access to the reference librarian, computers, etc. Data collected through this questionnaire will also be used in preparation for the construction of the new University library building.

Aside from the providing access to information, every academic library also has an educational role. As already mentioned the Bologna process, aside from bringing the focus to the quality, also aims to establish the foundations for lifelong learning and requires that

institutions of higher learning ensure the environment for the acquisition of information literacy competencies. The need for student information literacy education has been recognized at the University of Zadar so the University Library organized several workshops on the citation and the use of information sources. In collaboration with the Department of Information Sciences the library is involved in teaching the Information Literacy course.

Since 2011 ZUL has devoted significant effort toward information literacy education. The library provides one-on-one instruction in information literacy within regular reference service and organizes workshops in specific IL topics such as citing references or searching databases. ZUL librarians' expertise in information literacy has been acknowledged University wide and librarians are invited to give an introductory lecture on library and information literacy to first year students as a part of the incoming student departmental orientation practicums. Furthermore, the ZUL librarians are invited to teach more extensive workshops and cover certain information literacy topics in depth as a part of research methodology courses. Recognizing the need for standalone course in information literacy since the academic year 2011/2012 the ZUL librarians and the Department of Information Science professors jointly teach an elective course in Information Literacy. The course is based on ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education and is structured as a set of practical exercises. After teaching this course for two semesters, the researchers at the Department of Information Studies conducted a research on students' and faculties' opinions concerning the information literacy competencies covered in the IL course curriculum. The results of the interviews have shown that only after getting familiar with the IL course curriculum did the professors become aware of the help they could get from the librarians, and that librarians could enrich their course curricula and teaching process. Therefore, this research has shown that the IL course is needed, not only because of the direct benefits for students, but also because it sets the stage for development of advanced models of IL education which are based on professor and librarian collaboration. (Rubinić, Stričević, Juric, 2013). Increasing involvement of university librarians in teaching university courses is one of the reasons why several university librarians decided to continue their education on the doctoral level in the area of information sciences. The university as well as the library management recognize and encourage this initiative on the part of the librarians.

4 Concluding remarks

Quality assurance, which entails both formal and informal processes for supporting quality goals and applicability of quality standards, has become an important feature of modern higher education.

The common values in the quality culture are undoubtedly HE institutions autonomy, transparency and flexibility of performance. QA procedures depart from the presumption that quality culture requires both strong visionary and strategic leadership at the top of the university, complemented by bottom-up inclusion of different stakeholders. Inclusion of the academic libraries as learning resources centers is of crucial importance for the better quality of HE institutions.

From the observation of two libraries, library of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Osijek and University library in Zadar, it can be concluded that both libraries have been active in the process of Quality Assurance. Even though both libraries are included in the development strategies of their institutions with specific tasks assigned in the process of the Bologna reform, there is no follow up in terms of the action plan, funding, continuous monitoring of detailed and comprehensive quality indicators (beyond those

traditional quantitative ones, and the user satisfaction survey data), or assessment. It is also evident that there is insufficient demand from the academic environment for measuring library service quality. The process of accreditation, re-accreditation and the various external audits and evaluations are yet to develop the effective ways to assess the quality of library services adequately and in depth. A part of the responsibility surely lays in the feedback from the audited libraries to the accrediting agencies.

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