



Lifelong
Learning
Programme

With the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union

**„Identifying Barriers in Promoting the European Standards and Guidelines
for Quality Assurance at Institutional Level“**

IBAR

Agreement number – 2010 – 4663/001 - 001

WP11
Quality and Information
National study – Poland
2013

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

IBAR Project
Work-Package11

Quality and Information Poland

Wersja robocza 12 marca 2013 r.

Research Team, Warsaw School of Economics
Professor Ewa Chmielecka
Professor Stefan Doroszewicz
Dr Jakub Brdulak
Dr Piotr Miller
Aneta Szydłowska

Policy context:

The fundamental and applicable regulation stipulating the requirements concerning the collection and delivery of information by HEIs to any party concerned is the Act "Law on Higher Education" (PSW). Article 35 of the Act obliges HEIs to submit before October 15th of the consecutive year following the accounting period, to the minister responsible for higher education, the annual report on a HEI's activities, supplemented by information regarding the staff appointed in the fields of study offered. The minister in charge of higher education specifies by means of directive the form of an annual report.

Other legal acts significantly influencing information management in HEIs include:

- Law on personal data protection
- Law on access to public information, which lays down the mode of publishing public information, including official documents, in Public Information Bulletin (BIP). The Act refers to the units of public finance, which include state-owned HEIs.
- Law on Public Statistics

In 2010 POL-on project commenced on implementing the system providing information on higher education in Poland. The completion of the process is scheduled for 2013. The construction of the system is carried out by 3 institutions as a systemic partnership project within the framework of Priority IV, sub-action of action 4.1.3 of the Human Capital Operational Programme:

- Information Processing Institute,
- Interdisciplinary Centre for Mathematical and Computational Modelling at University of Warsaw,
- Index Copernicus.

The most important task of the POL-on system is to develop a global database on scientific units and research in Poland. The data to be collected are intended to support, or have already been used for this purpose, decision-making processes regarding HEIs in the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

The system stores full data of all Polish research units, offering public access, under the acts and directives of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. The system has been divided into 4 main modules:

- research staff,
- fields of study,
- units,
- students.

The system also offers data concerning scientific publications and HEIs evaluation results. A certain part of the system is available exclusively to civil servants.

Methodology:

Analysis of documents and semi-structured interviews, including number of respondents interviewed/contacted in individual categories, e.g. management of the HEI responsible for information management (IM) at the institutional and faculty level, management of the HEI regarding internal quality assurance, IM unit staff, selected teaching staff, selected students.

Q1: Is there any policy, regulations or practice at national level referring to the provision of information about HEIs and by HEIs (to society at large, various institutions, HEIs' stakeholders and the like)?

AMU	<p>As far as the first item is concerned, the method of collecting (transferring) information is formed into a clear structure. The HEI as a whole is obliged to provide certain authorities with selected reports, partly or fully related to QA in teaching, under certain legal regulations (the authorities in question include, in particular, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and Central Statistical Office). The reports are of routine and systematic character. The process of collecting the necessary information is initiated at the level of reporting achievements by individual staff members, the data being gathered, classified and synthesized at particular levels: of a section/chair, an institute and faculty, of the whole HEI- with respect to its organizational structure. The reports are analysed by the authorities at suitable levels. Apart from this, in the office for education other information, received from other sources and regarding education, is collected and processed. Some of those materials are of internal importance to the HEI, some of them are documents published by the HEI. A special role in this respect is played by a recently implemented POL-on system.</p> <p>Apart from this, the Polish Accreditation Committee is entitled to obtain any data related to self-assessment reports, developed by individual units of the HEI, as well as the data required for the evaluation performed by evaluation teams during the accreditation procedure. This information is provided by corresponding HEI units of every level: from the overall HEI level (Quality Assurance Office, Rector's Office, educational department), through faculty level, its units to individual staff members.</p>
WSE	<p>WSE collects and distributes information, according to the regulations in force (see the example of AMU). In 2010 the works on POL-on system were initiated; the activities are planned for 3 years proceedings. WSE prepares self-assessment during accreditation procedures of PKA and other units.</p>
BWS	<p>BWS provides information according to the requirements stipulated by law. Information management, in particular, disseminating information regarding learning outcomes, is determined by the recommendations of Polish Accreditation Committee. Basing on them, the HEI makes decisions concerning the accessibility of information.</p> <p>BWS prepares the information for POL-on system, however, prior to the introduction of the system, similar information was also collected, analysed and used. Hence, introducing POL-on did not contribute to any improvement in information management in the HEI. At BWS POL-on is perceived as another reporting requirement, which does not involve particularly high costs, at the same time not generating any added value for the HEI.</p>
TUL	<p>According to the Act on Higher Education Art. 35, by October 15th of the consecutive year following the accounting period the Rector is obliged to submit to the Minister of Science and Higher Education the annual report on the HEI activities, supplemented by information regarding the staff appointed in the fields of study offered. Apart from this, the HEI is obliged to cooperate with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education within the framework of the POL-on system, by providing information concerning students, researchers, publications, evaluating the results of teaching within TUL. The system is focused on organising information serving for the development of indicators in the process of making strategic decisions regarding HE in Poland. The information generated by the system is independent of the HE-related data published by CSO. Part of the information collected within the system is commonly accessible.</p>

Synthesis	All the HEIs develop their information management policy according to the provisions of national legal framework, i.e. primarily the articles of the “Law on Higher Education”, as well as the data reported by CSO. The POL-on system unifies and organizes databases, which is of crucial importance for large HEIs such as WSE, AMU or TUL.
Barriers	Limited flexibility of the POL-on system is manifested, among others, when ECTS credits are balanced, in the process of combined education offered jointly with a foreign partner – a dual diploma.
Good practices	In large HEIs with advanced and well-developed structures, POL-on is appreciated for its effectiveness and usefulness – it is perceived as a good practice, which was previously lacking.

Q2: What is the institutional policy and practice regarding the collection and analysis of information connected with aspects a) – g)?

a) student progression and success rates:

AMU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – student’s and teacher’s perspective: USOS (University System of Student Service) – the main source of information on learning. It contains updated information concerning registration to classes, syllabuses, calendar of events, timetable, student’s performance record – the analysis of the USOS data performed by educational department is transferred to the Rector’s annual reports. Similar analyses may be performed by any unit of the HEI.
WSE	The strategy and practice of using information on students’ performance and grading system are specified in the HEI Studies Regulations (Section IV). The information regarding students’ performance is used to monitor progress in learning; it also helps to evaluate the advancement towards the adopted learning outcomes to be achieved. The information is not the basis for developing new or modifying the existing study programmes. The system referred to as the “Virtual Dean’s Office” is in operation. Also other systems such as so called “Essentials” – a system supporting academic teachers in conducting their classes, are in use. Some academic teachers apply commonly available IT solutions, e.g. skydrive, dropbox, Google discussion lists.
BWS	<p>“Uczelnia XP” IT system is in operation – it stores all the information regarding the educational process, periodical student assessment in relation to each student and each subject.</p> <p>In cooperation with the University of Wales (2003-2007) a team for measuring / evaluating the learning outcomes was formed. Currently (since February 1st 2013) the team has resumed their activity; their objective is to analyse learning outcomes after each examination session on the basis of e.g. grades normal distribution. Additionally, it is planned that BA / MA dissertations will be analysed after the summer session.</p>
TUL	The HEI continuously collects the data on students’ performance. The reports containing such data are generated regularly by each faculty. The person responsible for developing the data basis on learning outcomes is the Dean of a particular faculty. The data collected serve as the basis for further analysis of grades distribution obtained by students over time; the analysis of grades distribution also serves as the basis for a faculty authorities to react in case distinct anomalies occur, e.g. there is a set of overrated grades or lack of dispersion. In similar cases it is the HEIs’ good practice that the Dean talks to the teacher conducting the class at other students’ presence. The

	objective of this discussion is to specify the anomalies and develop a recovery plan. One of the results of similar practice was eliminating the option of granting a credit exclusively on the basis of students' attendance.
--	--

b) employability of graduates:

AMU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – HEI perspective: Career Office conducts the activities defined in “stakeholders” package (WP9) – of routine character, based on HEI’s procedures, and reports them to the Rector. The Office looks forward to the national model of monitoring their graduates’ careers, which is required by the law on HE. The Ministry of Science and Education is developing a similar model, based on the CSO database. – Other units’ perspective: they do not do it systematically, in some cases they receive enquiries from individual employers interested in groups of graduates complying with, e.g. the institute’s profile. Also individual graduates are contacted. – According to one of students (in the last year of her studies!), she has found out that Career Office exists only recently; generally, the Office is not perceived by students as an effective intermediary establishing relationship with the labour market.
WSE	<p>Information exchange between WSE graduates takes place through the Alumni Office and other cooperating units. The main tasks of the Office include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – establishing and maintaining close relationship between the HEI and its alumni, – helping students and alumni in career counselling and finding apprenticeship and internship offers, job offers in Poland and abroad, – supporting students and alumni in developing their career path. <p>The Office activities, among others, involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – collecting information on WSE students’ and alumni career paths, – maintaining relationship with the WSE graduates through alumni organisations <p>WSE conducts research into students and alumni after 6 months, 3, 5 and 10 years upon their graduation. The survey forms on alumni career paths are sent at e-mail addresses collected by WSE.</p>
BWS	<p>According to legal requirements, alumni careers are monitored. Currently an IT system is being implemented. So far the activities have been performed in a traditional way – through reunion meetings and surveys.</p> <p>Benchmarking visits are organized, aimed at learning more about the methods of monitoring alumni by other HEIs, the visits were paid to the Cracow University of Economics, to USA and Great Britain.</p>
TUL	<p>At TUL an electronic system of monitoring alumni careers is in operation - www.absolwenci.p.lodz.pl. Systematic surveys are conducted at three particular dates, namely, after six months, one year and three years upon the graduation. The alumni are requested to voluntarily register in the system and participate in a number of studies. At the due dates the HEI sends the reminders by e-mail, which motivates them to fill in an attached form. The survey form currently applied enquires about the place, position and employment terms and conditions; therefore the feedback received, with its form of descriptive statistics, provides only approximated recommendations for possible correction and improvement of the education process, thus not forming the basis for further regulatory measures in relation to education programmes. Currently, in cooperation with the faculty of Sociology of the University of Łódź, the works are in progress on a new questionnaire aimed at analyzing alumni’s attitudes towards education; with items related to learning outcomes to be incorporated in the form, so that further conclusions on the applied educational programmes could be drawn.</p>

c) students satisfaction with programmes:

AMU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The perspective of a candidate to studies: the information is obtained individually, mainly through the Internet, educational fairs and other initiatives of the Office for Promotion and Marketing – The perspective of a candidate admitted to studies: a separate information package on the principles of studies. An agreement on commencing the studies, concluded with the HEI and laying down the rights and responsibilities of both the parties. – The perspective of a student: information exchange with student self-government; basically, limited to scholarship and intervention-related issues. – The perspective of an AMU student and teacher: USOS as the means of administering student evaluation surveys. The Quality Assurance Office intervenes with the help of student government in case the surveys return rate is low. An employee receives a summarised result; they can see their position within the HEI. – A student collects on their own only the documents certifying the completion of particular cycles of education (BA diploma, a student's book – if still in use, other documents such as internship log are submitted to a Dean's Office). A limited number of students hold a full portfolio of their achievements. – The perspective of an institute / faculty: the analysis of survey results is sent to the QA Office. – A separate information package is available for students with disabilities, with a dedicated information circulation system – conducted via a Rector's deputy for students with disabilities.
WSE	<p>The main source of information are survey forms filled in by students. The questionnaires available online on the WSE website students enable assessing a particular class. The class is also assessed by the teacher; thus, they may compare their assessment to that of the students.</p> <p>The main problem here is a very limited number of forms filled in and returned. That is why the assessment lacks objectivity – the forms are typically filled in only by the students who did not like the class at all, or those who particularly liked it. With so polarised opinions, the assessment does not seem to be reliable.</p> <p>The results of student assessment are used in the process of overall performance assessment, performed according to the principles laid down in the WSE Statutes.</p>
BWS	<p>The main source of information is the system of survey studies – all teachers are assessed every 2 years. Students can provide their general remarks in the survey. Currently students administer their own research into the level of satisfaction with the programmes. On the basis of the results received a study will be published and a debate organised. Similar research will be conducted on regular basis. Additionally, programmes evaluation surveys are available both in electronic and paper versions (a box for collecting students' opinions has been placed in front of the Rector's Office). It is crucial for the authorities to have access to the study outcomes only, thus they cannot interfere the research process. Also, the HEI's authorities organize cyclical meetings, where students' opinions on their studies are expressed. Placing a box is intended for the motions and complaints to be submitted by students.</p>
TUL	<p>At present the indicators of students' satisfaction with the educational service provided by the HEI are the results of students evaluative surveys on classes, obtained regularly every term. At the initiative of the Students Committee for Education within the HEI, in cooperation with the Faculty of Sociology of the University of Łódź, works have commenced on two questionnaires analysing students' satisfaction with educational service offered, including, among others, the operation of deans' offices. One of the questionnaires designed is intended to generate, based on a defined multi-dimensional satisfaction with the service provided, an overall feedback on students' emotional reactions to various aspects of educational process; another questionnaire will help to</p>

	<p>closer identify the information generated by particular items of the first questionnaire mentioned, e.g. it will specify the conditions of students individual learning. There are two versions of the questionnaires designed – one version is dedicated to first-year students, the other one – to other students. Currently pilot studies on the questionnaires are in progress. The outcomes of the study on student satisfaction with educational service will serve as the basis for possible further correction and improvement of the educational process, as well as the HEI’s functioning; they will also help to mitigate negative habits in students, such as copyright breach.</p>
--	--

d) effectiveness of teaching staff:

AMU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Teacher’s perspective: the notion of “effectiveness” not fully comprehensible. For educational activities – see the USOS system. – The perspective of an institute / faculty: annual teachers’ reports on their initiative and achievements in research and education. They serve as the basis for employee performance assessment under the Act on HE.
WSE	<p>Researchers complete annual reports, which are considered during their superiors’ assessment. The reports are divided into three categories: research, educational and organizational activities. As regards educational activity, it is essential that a teacher meets the minimum work load requirements (see WP10: Quality and Teaching). In the questionnaire students’ assessment is considered, however, it is not the main indicator, due to insufficiencies of this assessment. In view of the competitive character of the classes conducted at WSE, where students choose their teachers, a simplified assumption can be adopted: a teacher who is able to start their classes with the students enrolled in their groups, is perceived by students as an effective teacher.</p>
BWS	<p>The effectiveness is assessed by means of surveys administered among students. The achievements in research are not considered, due to exclusively educational character of the HEI. At the same time the HEI values scientific degrees of its employees; the system of obtaining scientific degrees in Poland is primarily related to research (see WP10 – Quality and Teaching). Also, due to relatively small scale of the HEI, employee assessment in terms of organizational activity is largely informal; it is conducted by the HEI’s authorities (the Vice-Rector and the Rector).</p>
TUL	<p>The outcomes of academic staff activity are analysed by means of annual performance assessment, conducted by Dean’s committees. Three dimensions of a teacher’s activity are evaluated: educational, research and organisational; to the dimensions mentioned the comments marked as 0.4, 0.4 and 02 are related respectively. The principles of quantifying a teacher’s achievements have been formulated as regards research. There are no rules of evaluating educational or organisational activities. As the indicators enabling general assessment of a teacher’s educational activity, student evaluation results and hospitation-based assessment can be regarded. Recently an additional channel for receiving information on teachers’ educational activity has been activated. It has been established that in case of negative opinions regarding an academic teacher students used to refrain from informing the faculty authorities about the situation occurring. The problem of communication between the parties, primarily concerning the information on teacher’s effectiveness, has been solved at TUL by the introduction of an intermediary body – an ombudsman. In the case mentioned above, the dean requires from the teacher and their supervisor the explanation of an event reported by the students to the ombudsman. For instance, recently, on the basis of the ombudsman’s report and the following investigation, a lecturer has lost the authorisation to administer the examining of their students.</p> <p>The information specifying the effectiveness of academic teachers’ activity is applied primarily during the annual assessment performed by dean’s committees. Two</p>

	consecutive negative assessments serve as the basis for termination of employment contract with a particular teacher. Currently at TUL there is no additional gratification for an academic teacher, receiving excellent notes. Similarly, at TUL there is no long-term assessment of academic teachers' effectiveness, except for the cases of vacancies – retirement – and the title to grant scientific degrees.
--	---

e) profile of the student population;

AMU	Information is collected by the educational department, predominantly during recruitment. It consists of personal details such as gender, origin (urban or rural area, high school location). Collecting sensitive data of this type is constrained by the legal framework stipulated by the Act on Personal Data Protection. Details concerning foreign students are gathered and transferred to certain authorities (e.g. Border Guard). The committees for financial support request the information concerning a family income. As regards the "profile" defined as the field of study, there is complete record stored by USOS and the educational department.
WSE	WSE collects a variety of data concerning the candidates, students and alumni. The scope of data gathered is specified by the stipulations of the Act on Personal Data Protection. The data are collected on the basis of the act on Higher Education currently in force. The information is stored in a number of databases with a differentiated authorisation in terms of accessing them. In WSE there are no strategy or practices related to obtaining, collecting, analysing or using the information on student population profile in terms of their attitudes, their opinion on study programmes or study process. The data regarding student population are collected primarily during the recruitment process. The data stored enables the identification of middle-aged, foreign and disabled students. There is no direct tool for the identification of ethnic minorities; except for special circumstances, e.g. commencing the studies due to the right of asylum granted, under the Act on Higher Education.
BWS	Access to the data of this type is provided by the IT system Uczelnia XP. A variety of comparative studies can be performed. All personal data are protected by law.
TUL	At TUL the studies are conducted on the profile of student population with regard to different grouping variables, characterising this population. One of such variables is gender; the data concerning the number of women studying at the university of technology are used in the promotion campaign "girls welcome at polytechnics", in doing research on women frequency dynamics at difficult fields of study, in analysing further employment, etc. Apart from that, the HEI conducts the analyses of students "survival", i.e. the analyses of the efficiency of educational process in respect to a particular region of students origin, or the school which they graduated from, in order to effectively promote TUL within the secondary level of education, or extend TUL's patronage over selected schools. Studies and analyses of a student profile are also performed with regard to their initial mathematical knowledge and skills. In this case the result of the analyses led to certain modification of educational programme a new subject – "Introduction to mathematical analysis" was incorporated, dedicated to a part of first-year students population. The knowledge of student population profile is also applied to design educational paths, in particular, for individuals of outstanding skills and learning record.

f) learning resources available and their costs;

AMU	The HEI conducts activities in accordance with law and the Act on Public Finance. No additional analyses are performed in this area. The Bursar's Office is responsible for
-----	---

	preparing the cost estimates.
WSE	The HEI has information on the income from post-graduate, full-time, part-time and evening studies, or studies offered to foreign students. The data are stored by the WSE Bursar's Office. The HEI does not differentiate these costs, it conducts an overall record of income and expenditure.
BWS	The analyses of resources are performed on the basis of spreadsheets. The information is collected and stored in a simple internal database. The estimation of structural costs is particularly important.
TUL	The specific character of educational activities of individual faculties determines the deans' autonomous policies concerning the organisation of information on availability of such resources as teaching staff, educational programmes, materials and equipment dedicated for supporting the educational process, representatives of business practice invited to conduct selected classes, the enterprises offering internships and traineeships to students. The information on educational resources dedicated to foreign students or those offered by foreign HEIs or companies (traineeships) is primarily stored and analysed in the Centre for International Education. The costs of resources are planned, filed and they constitute a part of concise information aggregating the data from all the HEI's units and transferred to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in the form of the Rector's annual report. The costs of stationary education, represented by the costs of educating one student, are estimated by the deans individually. Similar estimates serve as the basis for calculating the fee for extramural studies.

g) institution's own key performance indicators.

AMU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – At the HEI level they are calculated and transferred to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MSHE) and CSO on regular basis. Currently POL-on system is used in case of MSHE. The information crucial for obtaining subsidies and funding of student financial support, is prioritised and includes: the number of students, the proportion between the number of students and teachers, minimum teaching and research staff complement, etc. – At the level of other HEI general units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ educational department draws up the data summary, required by POL-on with reference to teaching ○ Quality Assurance Office, in general, does not contribute to the efficiency of the institution, however, it does not seem to fully understand the question – At the level of units such as an institute / faculty: reports for the Polish Accreditation Committee require the specification of human resources and financial policies of a unit – it is difficult to determine whether the policies are the components of "effectiveness".
WSE	At WSE there is no formal policy regarding the collection, analysing and publishing information on the institution's effectiveness indicators. The WSE Statutes (§130) briefly describes the Chancellor's duties regarding the WSE administrative and business activities. However, the pattern of reports to MSHE and CSO imposes certain requirements related to the data structure and analysis.
BWS	The examination of the institution shall be conducted through the implementation of controlling. The objective of the model implementation is to decentralise the management within BWS, to increase the decision-making competence, to focus on achieving strategic and financial objectives. In BWS the cost effectiveness of individual fields of study is being calculated.
TUL	At TUL the indicative analysis of the HEI operation is not performed (relevant econometric models are not used). Currently an IT system is being developed for unified

	collecting, integration and analysis of all the data, specifying the HEI functioning. After its implementation, it is expected that a similar analysis will be performed. The original information enabling the indicative assessment of the effectiveness of HEI's operation is transferred to MSHE in the form of the Rector's annual report, the data are not published.
--	---

Synthesis	All the HEIs manage information in a relatively sophisticated way. Each aspect specified by ESG is subject to certain activities. The HEIs tend to appreciate the importance of information. At the same time it can be noted that the information concerning the educational process is managed in a more comprehensive way than the information on HEIs operational activities.
Barriers	
Good practices	

Q3: What is the institutional policy and practice regarding *the use* of information connected to aspects a) – g)? For what *purpose* is it used (decision-making, corrective action, improvement, innovation)?

AMU	<p>As mentioned above in the introduction, information gathering is conducted systematically in “vertical direction” – particular units have to submit to the assigned higher level units their cyclical routine reports, in accordance with the decision-making structure in the whole HEI. The reports fulfil all the functions mentioned: they are used in decision-making, corrective action and improvement.</p> <p>It can be illustrated by the examples below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – At the level of the Rector, the Quality Assurance Office and educational department: the analysis of these results is required by the principles of drawing up Rector's annual reports on the HEI condition. Naturally, they serve as the basis for correcting the HEI's policy, for improvement, etc. They are discussed on the forums of collective bodies, the decisions are made by the Rector(s), who use the information submitted by the subordinate offices. – Educational or QA offices do not conduct an independent information policy: they are the Rector's supporting services and their role is to provide data. – The level of a section/institute: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a report on a section's activities – annually – according to the AMU statutes – on research, teaching, etc. serves as the basis for formulating plans of further activities, their correction, improvement, promoting and rewarding staff, etc. ○ documentation related to the programmes of studies (syllabuses, curricula) – the basis for their revision by the authors and supervisory bodies, for corrective activities and improvement, etc. ○ the information collected is often used in resolving current problems of the units, e.g. conflicts in employee mutual relations or student – teacher relations. – A student / teacher level: the results of student assessment survey are incorporated in the periodical teacher performance assessment and considered in the process of their self-development, as well as in the unit's HR policy.
WSE	The information collected and analysed in items a) - g) is used in certain activities related to specific areas. Typically, the issues related to information use are regulated by legal documents – internal (e.g. the resolutions of the Senate, Rector's Directives)

	<p>and external (the acts)). Also, the HEI uses the information for the purposes of accreditation and for rankings. With regard to this area, currently actions are carried out, aimed at establishing a unit which would integrate the data stored in the HEI's databases and by particular units for specific purposes.</p> <p>At the same time, the information gathered and processed is used for typical corrective and improvement actions within a particular unit.</p>
BWS	<p>BWS uses the information gathered and processed within the a) – g) items. It serves as the basis for conducting any corrective actions – an efficient system of information management enables, above all, fast and effective decision-making. In particular, due to the educational profile of the HEI, the information collected and processed is used for the improvement of student educating process, which in turn enables the HEI further development. The operation of BWS is, to a large extent, similar to that of a company – therefore any activity undertaken on the basis of the information stored should lead either to growth of income or to cost reduction.</p>
TUL	<p>The information collected and analysed in items a) - g) is used for certain activities related to particular areas. They serve as the basis for performing any corrective action – an efficient system of information management enables, above all, fast and effective decision-making.</p>
Synthesis	<p>In all the HEIs the information collected and analysed is used in the processes of improvement and development.</p>
Barriers	<p>Extended organisational structures in some instances lead to problems related to responsibility for the information.</p>
Good practices	<p>Introducing one IT system for collecting all the data related to the HEIs operation.</p>

Q4: How effective is the collection, analysis and use of information within the institution?

Good to address especially: organisational structures; levels of responsibility; extent of formalisation in internal quality assurance processes; plans, reasons for changes and expected benefits (if relevant)

AMU	<p>The Rector's level and HEI-wide units:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Quality Assurance Office: collecting information is quite effective (measured by the number of respondents), the analyses are carried out – and used by decision-making bodies – it is very effective. There are some difficulties posed by the interpretation of the notion of “effectiveness” and the method of measuring it. – Educational department: in some cases enquiries are received concerning the data unavailable directly, as they are not stored in databases according to the profiles defined. For instance, a change in the algorithm of budget subsidies imposes new data organizing and analysis. Currently the stage of “adjustment” takes place (see POL-on) and the information is integrated and supplemented so that almost any reply profile is possible. The use of information varies – in some cases it depends on current situation or immediate needs; however, it should be more systematic and performed also by more HEI units, not limited only to the Rector's Office. <p>The level of a section / institute:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Systematic collection and using data related to the quality of teaching was established as a common approach upon the introduction of NQF and QA systems. Prior to that, procedures and documents could be described as chaotic. Currently the organization of syllabuses and curricula, clear modification procedures, etc. are in place. – Key documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • routine reports in „vertical” direction, see previous items: standardised circulation of information within a decision-making body,
-----	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • special requirements towards the unit-related information, e.g. in case of accreditation, • applying for the authorisation to grant scientific degrees or conduct study programmes – in this case the analyses of HR and other resources are required.
WSE	Collecting, analysing and using information varies across the units; however, in general, it can be regarded as effective. IT systems significantly support the process of information management, e.g. the above mentioned “Virtual Dean’s Office” or “Essentials”. One of disadvantages related to information management is lack of integrity, e.g. “Virtual Dean’s Office” is not compatible with “Essentials”. Another problem is low return rate of student surveys on class assessment.
BWS	Collecting, analysing and using information in the HEI is effective. The school management system “Uczelnia XP” was implemented 3 years ago. It received very positive opinions, as it enables fast and convenient access to information. One of crucial conditions determining the effectiveness of IT system is one shared database at the data level. Thus, all the units within the HEI, as well as students, use the same data. Therefore, the situation of collecting the same data by various units does not occur; also the data do not differ across the units. There is still a lot to do as regards the cost or the HEI infrastructure management. Also, for this reason HEI controlling is developed.
TUL	At TUL and at its HEI-wide level, the Department of Teaching is responsible for collecting and analysing information, jointly with the corresponding organisational units within faculties. The main objective of the Educational Department is to organise the data required in the process of drawing up Rector’s annual report, submitted to MSHE, as well as to provide security (confidentiality) of the information generated. The general assessment of the effectiveness of collecting, analysing and using the information at TUL is negative. The existing IT system is not suitable for the integration and analysis of a variety of information connected with the HEI activities, e.g. those of its faculties. The implementation of the new system will help to solve those problems, exclusively related to teaching / learning.
Synthesis	In all the HEIs information management can be evaluated as effective. In case of large HEIs (WSE, AMU, TUL), reaching integrity across the systems in operation. This process was especially supported by POL-on. In case of BWS the integration of information was reached through the implementation of one system with wide range of functionalities; thus, the data are stored entirely within this particular system.
Barriers	Complex organisational structures distorting the implementation of universal / unified solutions.
Good practices	Implementing one IT system to collect all the data related to the HEIs operation.

Q5: What is the institutional policy and practice regarding *publication* of information connected to aspects h) – n)? What do you keep internal? What do you publish externally? How do HEIs verify whether the expectations concerning impartiality and objectiveness of published information are fulfilled?

AMU	AMU as a public HEI is legally obliged to publish externally most of the information collected. The publication is to some extent regulated by the Public Information Bulletin. As regards relations with social environment, routine activities are undertaken by two units: Promotion and Marketing Office and Career Office. They also answer basic questions sent to the HEI by external stakeholders, as well as initiate information activities. The Career Office takes care, in particular, of relations with the representatives of labour market and the HEI’s alumni. Promotion Office takes care, in particular, of
-----	---

	<p>relations with candidates for studies, it also creates the image of the HEI. Among the main publically accessible publications we should mention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rector’s annual report on the HEI condition, containing summarised information on all relevant aspects of AMU activities. Rector’s annual report is published in a form of a book distributed by the Rector’s Office. Due to its contents, as it reports AMU’s “internal” matters, it can be regarded as an internal document, however, it is published on the HEI’s website and is commonly accessible. – Other information required by BIP is publically available and has to be published on the AMU’s website – Brochures containing information on faculties, fields of studies, other study modes (post-graduate and other studies) – any other promotional materials concerning education at any unit of the HEI. – Information brochures on international studies and programmes offered in foreign languages – Other promotional materials – The press edited by the HEI <p>Additional information on aspects h-l:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Students’ perspective: students government publishes various information on their Facebook profile, – An institute or section perspective – presenting the units on the HEI websites; – USOS offers basic information concerning employees, however, many of them have their own sites; – Typically, upon the completion of a series of studies, usually every year the results of student surveys are published by USOS – the report is available on the HEI websites and on faculties websites – Self-assessment required by QA Office – also performed annually.
WSE	<p>WSE as a public HEI is obliged to publish externally most of the information collected. The publication is regulated by the Public Information Bulletin. In addition, the information is published in the HEI press and through publically accessible websites.</p> <p>There are two departments in WSE, responsible, in particular, for publishing and managing external information: the Office for Information and Promotion (BliP) and Press Office (BP). For instance, BliP is obliged to approve any material published externally, which bears the logo of WSE.</p> <p>Any unit of the HEI (e.g. chairs, departments, colleges) is entitled to independently edit the contents of their own website, based on the CMS system. The HEI is active on social portals. There is a central WSE profile and the Rector’s Service, administered by BliP. Apart from this, certain units (colleges, administrative units) create their own profiles.</p> <p>Many units also issue a paper version of their information materials. For instance, the Centre for International Programmes edits information materials in foreign languages for foreign students. Heads of post-graduate studies also draw up their own brochures and other information materials (e.g. films published on YouTube).</p> <p>In order to meet the requirements of accreditation or to participate in rankings, currently the HEI conducts works aimed at organising a unit, responsible for “integrating” information management.</p>
BWS	<p>BWS can conduct a fully independent policy of sharing information externally, as it is a private HEI. Thus, the HEI shares much information related to education (the objectives, learning outcomes, etc.), however, all the activities related to publishing information are</p>

	<p>coordinated by the HEI top authorities. Each unit provides information within their competence. The information of lower priority is published after its verification by the authorities (in most cases, by the Rector). Top priority information is discussed by the College of Rectors.</p> <p>In January 2013 a post of the HEI's Press Officer was established. The Press Officer reports directly to the Rector. Their role is to cooperate with the media (the press, regional portals). The Press Officer is also responsible for social network marketing (Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, etc.). It is the Press Officer's duty to look after the HEI websites.</p>
TUL	<p>In TUL for external relations the following institutions are responsible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rector's Press Office - HEI Press Officer - Promotion Department <p>The institutions mentioned are responsible for relations with the media, informing the environment about the HEI's achievements and their educational offer. For communication with the environment the HEI "Życie uczelni" monthly magazine is used (circulation 800 pcs), distributed internally and externally, and, above all, the Internet is exploited. The magazine typically publishes comments on current events within the HEI, including those related to students, research, teaching and administrative staff. It also publishes information concerning its managing staff current achievements and details regarding their career development. Any information specifying educational programmes, including the expected learning outcomes and employment opportunities is published, first of all, on the HEI and its faculties websites, both in Polish and English. The HEI website also serves as the channel of communication with business community. For instance, a knowledge sharing platform focused on innovation has been launched as part of this website. Regrettably, the information flow takes place only in one direction – companies rarely visit the HEI website, they do not initiate information exchange. The communication with the region's administration via the Internet is even more limited; the immediate consequence of the status quo is the fact that the role of TUL has not been taken into consideration in the regional development strategy.</p> <p>As far as internal communication is concerned, Facebook is an important channel, used predominantly by students for making comments on various internal and external events.</p> <p>The Press Officer is responsible for publishing information on the achievements of the HEI and its employees.</p>
Synthesis	<p>All the HEIs have units responsible for coordinating the process of sharing information externally. The units within their competences take care of providing information. In case of large HEIs with well developed structures (WSE, AMU, TUL), information is published by the units which have access to it. In case of BWS all the information published has to be approved by the HEI's top authorities.</p>
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In case of centralised information management, delays in publishing information are observed. – In case of decentralised information management, the risk of overlapping or inconsistent information occurs.
Good practices	<p>Establishing the unit responsible for the integration of the process of publishing information.</p>

Q6: What *barriers* and *effective practices* are in place as regards collection, use and publication of information in the institution? What can be done to enhance the current policy and practice in this area?

AMU	<p>The following barriers can be listed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – at the Rector’s (central) level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ QA Office during the first stage of their works developed some imperfect tools, generating too many data, which are not used. This is attributed to an incorrect conviction providing that more information contributes to higher quality; currently the attitude is corrected. ○ Insufficiencies in transferring information to internal stakeholders, e.g. to students. There is no Feedback – loop. For instance, feedback on teachers’ assessment should reach students more effectively. – at the level of units (sections/ institutes): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ transparency and consistency of employee assessment criteria: teaching and research as the basis for assessment, however, evaluation credits are granted predominantly for research ○ obligation of filing paper documents, parallel to electronic, stipulated by the act on filing, nowadays outdated. – at students’ level: students have an impression of not being listened to, which means that the channel of communication between students and the HEI does not function properly. Insufficient information concerning, in particular, the future job. <p>Effective practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – rational judgement on the amount of necessary information. <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Greater transparency in decision-making, information justifying the decisions made by the authorities.</p>
WSE	<p>Effective practices as regards collecting, analysing, using and publishing information include numerous Internet network applications, supporting the recruitment and studying processes, as well as collecting alumni-related information. They provide instant data introduction, access to them, referential data for monitoring and developing by students their study path. The applications mainly consist of a number of dedicated WSE websites, multi-functional Virtual Dean’s Office, WSE Directory, Career Service, Essentials for Academic Teachers.</p> <p>Among the main barriers inhibiting the collection, analysing, using and publishing information we should mention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – students’ attitudes, reluctant to filling in the surveys, which are aimed at assessing classes conducted by academic teachers (approximately 5% of population), – lack of strategies or procedures enabling data processing and analysis, as well as using them for improving the operation of certain areas within the HEI. – Lack of strategy or systemic concept of conducting research into the profile of student population and its evolution over the studying process in terms of their attitudes and opinions on education, as well as using this information to improve the effectiveness of studying process, – constraints regarding collecting and publishing the data related to students, alumni or their workplace, as stipulated by the Law on Personal data protection.
BWS	<p>In BWS two main barriers have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – centralisation of the approval process as regards the information published, which may cause delays in its publishing. Decentralisation of the information publication process can be seen as the remedy. – Employees and students are reluctant to sharing information. Hence, the problem of collecting data occurs. BWS tries to reduce this barrier through establishing a variety

	of communication channels, as well as focusing both on formal and informal communication. In general, students do not see any particular barriers preventing them from conveying the information they wish to share.
TUL	<p>The main disadvantage of the existing IT system used for collecting information is the ineffective operation of channels of information exchange between the HEI particular units. Another drawback of this system is lack of possibility to analyse the data collected, in particular, the financial data. As mentioned above, a new IT system has been designed, which is expected to improve information flow and enable conducting multi-dimensional analyses of the information collected.</p> <p>Among the HEI's good practices related to using information on abnormal distributions of subject validation results, there are deans' talks with teachers conducted at the presence of students; the objective is to identify the causes of the anomaly observed and to specify the recovery measures.</p> <p>Another good practice within the HEI regarding data collection and information analysis on deficiencies in the classes conducted is the operation of Ombudsman's Office.</p>
Synthesis	All the HEIs surveyed acknowledge the occurrence of some barriers as regards the willingness to share information among stakeholders. It is also difficult to establish the balance between centralised character of information management process and its decentralisation. In case of large HEIs consisting of many units, clear attribution of the responsibility for information management to a particular structure can be perceived as a challenge .
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – General reluctance of employees, students and other stakeholders to sharing information.
Good practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – decentralisation of information management process – developing diversified communication channels, for both formal and informal communication. – Establishing the Ombudsman's Office, whose main task is to act as intermediary in communication between students and the HEI's authorities.

Conclusion:

The study demonstrates that ESG do not significantly influence the issues related to information management. National initiatives (such as the implementation of POL-on) or local legislation have a prevailing impact on information management. The introduction of POL-on is very much appreciated by state-owned HEIs. In case of BWS the information needs of decision-makers determine certain effectiveness in the related area. Such effectiveness is required, in particular, due to the fact that inappropriate decisions in non-state owned HEI, combined with other problems, including demographic ones, may lead to the HEI's collapse. Therefore, in BWS POL-on is not perceived as an initiative improving information management. The attitude towards the system is neutral; it is rather regarded as an additional reporting requirement.

It is worth mentioning that in case of the three state-owned HEIs, publishing information is rather decentralised. This may imply a relatively high level of trust towards the employees of these institutions. Despite this, there is still a need for an introduction of large and structurally complex unit of so called "integrator" – an entity granting access and performing the analysis of information for accreditation or rankings purposes, etc. Similar initiatives have been launched, among others, in WSE, where the Rector composed so called Accreditation Team, whose task is, among others, to develop a set of objectives they should accomplish in WSE.

General conclusion:

Information management is the area of high complexity level, tightly regulated by legal acts; it is connected with the overall operation of the unit, not only with the area of education. The effectiveness of information management is determined, among others, by a HEI size (large – with many faculties, small – with one faculty) ownership (state-owned, private). In the HEIs surveyed ESG are not treated as reference in the process of developing information systems.

Barriers:

- Reluctance of various HEIs stakeholders (internal and external) to sharing information
- Lack of systemic solutions clearly attributing to particular units the responsibilities for information management

Good practices:

- Decentralisation of information management process
- Implementation of POL-on system providing information on HEIs
- Focus on both formal and informal channels of communication