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INTERNATIONAL

Hcéres participation in the EU-Morocco twinning

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On 8 November 2022, Hcéres was in Rabat to speak at the closing conference of the EU-Morocco twinning project. In this framework, Hcéres has contributed to the development of the Moroccan National Agency for Evaluation and Quality Assurance of Higher Education and Scientific Research (ANEAQ).

A look back at 10 months of international cooperation and sharing of Hcéres' good practices.



Photos of the closing ceremony in front of the National Centre for Scientific and Technical Research of Morocco (Rabat, 8 November 2022 - @ANEAQ, 2022)

The objective of this twinning project, which began in January 2022, was twofold: **to strengthen Morocco's higher education and research and to bring it closer to the European Union**. Morocco is indeed facing a strong massification of higher education and difficulty in implementing the necessary reforms. The twinning, by consolidating and developing internal and external evaluation of the Moroccan higher education and research system, has been one of the key axes to accompany this reform, thus contributing to the modernisation of the sector and its rapprochement to the European standards and Guidelines ([ESG](#)).

Successful international cooperation between Hcéres and ANEAQ

The twinning, coordinated by France Education International, was able to benefit from the expertise of the Hcéres to accompany ANEAQ in the accomplishment of the activities of the two components of the twinning programme: the reinforcement of its organisational capacities and the approximation of the European reference systems and organisations, in particular, the *European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education* (ENQA).

The first part of the project strengthened ANEAQ's organisational capacities through the training of trainers and experts, the development of institutional evaluation, the collection and mobilisation of data, and the implementation of a communication plan. This phase mobilised all of the Hcéres departments and about ten agents.

The second part was dedicated to the design and development of the ANEAQ self-evaluation standards with a view to its approximation to the European standards and guidelines for possible membership of ENQA as an affiliated member.

A forward-looking closing ceremony

The closing ceremony of the twinning was held on 8 November 2022, at the National Centre for Scientific and Technical Research, in Rabat. It was opened by El Mokhtar Bakkour, Director of ANEAQ and gathered about fifty guests of honour, among whom Mohamed Khalfaoui, Secretary General of the Moroccan Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation, Jean-Christophe Filori, Head of the European Union Cooperation in Morocco and Gérald Brun, Attaché for Scientific and University Cooperation of the French Embassy in Morocco. This ceremony was an opportunity to come back on the achievements of the twinning and ingited rich discussions between the different stakeholders during two round tables.



Hcéres participation in the round tables of the closing ceremony. Photo on the left: Sophie Guillet (Europe and International Department) for round table 1. Photo on the right: Francis Cottet (Institutional Evaluation Department) for round table 2 (@ANEAQ, 2022).

The first round table, dedicated to the role of evaluation agencies in the development of the international dimension of higher education, brought together the visions and experiences of three agencies: ANEAQ, Hcéres and CTI.

"Agencies are important drivers of change. They help to shape the national higher education and research landscape, facilitate its recognition and the acceptance of degrees internationally. International cooperation and the exchange of good practice between agencies are key tools for reflecting on national practices in the interests of continuous improvement" (Sophie Guillet, Europe and International Department - Hcéres).

The second round table looked at the agencies' dialogue with their stakeholders in order to ensure that evaluation procedures are relevant and adapted to the entities evaluated. The Hcéres was able to share its methodology with ANEAQ, the Conference of University Presidents of Morocco, France Universités and the CDEFI.

"This year, we have started to introduce flexibility, which we call "modularity", into our reference systems to better adapt to the needs of the institutions we evaluate and to produce evaluation reports that are useful to them in terms of strategic decision-making" (Francis Cottet, Department for the Evaluation of Institutions - Hcéres).

The closing ceremony ended with the words of Bruno Curvale, Member State Project Manager and Head of the Higher Education Unit of France Education International:

"Evaluation is a shared good and its co-construction makes its results acceptable to the stakeholders" (Bruno Curvale - France Education International).

The twinning project has strengthened the links between ANEAQ and Hcéres, already linked by a cooperation agreement at the beginning of the twinning and by their membership in the network of francophone quality assurance agencies ([Fraq-Sup-Sup](#) ). This project also affirmed Hcéres' commitment to international evaluation engineering.

VOIR AUSSI