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**Author**

MARTIN, Michaela

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**Abstract**

This article presents the findings of exploratory research on the relationship of external quality assurance (EQA) systems and equity policies conducted at the UNESCO Institute for Educational Planning. Authors from Australia, Brazil, India and South Africa were invited to discuss this relationship in the context of their respective higher education systems. More precisely, the study set out to analyse: (1) whether EQA systems of the four countries in their orientation explicitly refer to national equity objectives; (2) whether quality models and quality assessment procedures developed under EQA systems address national equity concerns; and (3) whether EQA processes such as follow-up and reporting mechanisms are conducive to enhance the monitoring of national equity policies at the institutional level. The project reveals that national equity objectives can be reflected in EQA systems and that EQA can also be an instrument for the monitoring of national equity policies

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even where major differences occur in national EQA frameworks. The article also brings to light under which different modalities national equity concerns can be inserted in EQA systems. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)