

This chapter focuses upon the policy implications of the Institutional Evaluation Programme, from its origins until today. It describes the philosophy of the Programme and stresses that the goal of this initiative launched by the Association of European Universities (CRE) was to demonstrate that universities could regulate themselves. The European approach, the improvement orientation of the Programme and its focus on the institution as a whole were (and still are) important features: such an approach empowers universities to develop their institutional strategy in the context of a wide-ranging reflection about their autonomy and relationship to the State and other stakeholders and allows them to understand more fully European higher education policies and trends. The chapter closes with an analysis of the impact of the Programme on the quality assurance policy debate today – both at national and European level – and the role that the European University Association is able to play given the solid evaluation experience accrued through this Programme.