

Amaral, A. "Higher education in the process of European integration, globalizing economies and mobility of students and staff." In Huisman, J. and Maassen, P. (eds), *Higher Education and the Nation State*, London, Pergamon, 2001.

Keeping in mind the subsidiarity principle, the responsibility of creating the necessary mechanisms for quality evaluation will lie with each member state; the higher education institutions should have the power and responsibility for ensuring the quality of teaching and learning, while outside independent agencies would have the role of meta-evaluation or auditing. The responsibility for checking that proper mechanisms for quality are developed by member states remains at a supra-national level (the 'European dimension'). Ensuring transparency and comparability should not be linked to a formal system of quality assessment. Instead, the Commission should spend some of its resources funding activities such as the CRE institutional audit program, or the setting up of voluntary benchmarking and accreditation clubs, or promoting higher education comparative studies such as the international program reviews in order to improve the transparency and comparability of education and training, while avoiding the establishment of any centralized system of quality control and refraining from producing general rules and norms that might contribute to lowering the intra- and inter-institutional diversification of the higher education systems in Europe.