

THEMATIC ANALYSIS

STRATEGIC PLAN

2020-2025



This document provides a strategic plan for the ECTE from 2020-2025 in response to ESG 3.4 on conducting thematic analysis.

1. GENERAL COMMITMENT

- The ECTE considers thematic analysis as an activity that strengthens its own internal quality assurance and impacts the future activities of the agency.
- The ECTE commits to systematically use outputs from its accreditation and quality assurance activities for analysis to infer developmental and enhancement needs in the theological education sector.
- The ECTE commits to produce both general summaries and findings from its QA reports and thematic reports on specific topics that can be derived either from the ESG or from the sector.
- The ECTE commits to publish all results of its thematic analysis on its website and ensure availability to stakeholders and society.
- The ECTE commits to accompany thematic analysis with reflection on findings, identification of actions that contribute to new or existing QA processes and follow-up on the action points to ensure implementation.
- The ECTE commits to provide adequate resources (both internal and external) to systematically produce thematic analysis and implement following action points.

2. GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE

- The main aim of ECTE's thematic analysis will be to identify trends and actions for improvement in the theological education sector.
- Thematic analysis should not focus on the agencies own activities but on good practice and trends in the sector.
- The ECTE will take account of local, national and international contexts in its analyses.
- The ECTE will consider expanding the intelligence in the sector by partnering with national and international bodies and projects.
- The review reports deriving from QA activities (normally site visits) will be considered the primary source for thematic analysis.
- The ECTE will use the following a standard template for its thematic analysis reports:

- Executive summary including: general description, relation to ESG, data (what was analyzed, how many reports, etc.), where the data was found (e.g. in the APR, sections 3,4,5), abstract of what was found
- Introduction including: the context and timing, who did the analysis, the kind of analysis (summary-type, system wide, 'meta analysis' or thematic), the main guiding questions, criteria for data sources (what was used, why and what not). Sources can include review reports, other reports, thematic reports on specific topics, surveys, specification of qualitative or quantitative data, ethical considerations.
- Data and findings
- Reflection and actions, including: reflection on improvement of policies and processes and indication of specific actions,
- Dissemination, including: how the report will be published, language and wider dissemination.
- Conclusions, including: what was done, what was found, what we plan to do, further study.

3. SYSTEMATIC IMPLEMENTATION

The following systematic devices are implemented in ECTE policy and processes to ensure a systematic approach to thematic analysis.

- Thematic analysis will appear for monitoring and progress during the *Annual Internal Review, Improvement and Monitoring* session each Spring Council meeting.
- The ECTE Council will select and approve topics for thematic analyses every 5 years.
- Each year will focus on one theme and at least one thematic analysis will be completed.
- The review report templates will ensure adequate data collection points for the chosen themes. If necessary, additional sections/questions will be included.
- The Annual Progress Reports will feature Addendums to follow up on action points from the thematic analysis feature in any given year.
- The ECTE website will have a page listing thematic analyses.

4. INITIAL TIMELINE

- August 2020 – production of draft strategic plan (General Secretary)
- August 2020 – production of 2020 (first) thematic analysis
- November 2020 - approval of strategic plan and budget for TA (Council)
- November 2020 - approval of action points deriving from first thematic analysis (Council)
- By Spring 2021 – selection of themes for thematic analyses 2021-2025 (Council).

Examples of themes to select:

- Trends in rating most critical areas of ECTE Standards and Guidelines – collected every year from APRs (system-wide analysis)
- Gender trends in theological faculty and theological graduates (specific topic)
- Trends toward online delivery post COVID-19
- Trends in models of blended learning (specific topic)

- Trends in holistic balance of 4 purposes (specific topic)
- The place of ancient languages in theological education (meta-analysis)
- Research outputs in TE (meta-analysis)
- Trends in vigilance against academic fraud (ESG 1.1)
- Trends in involving students and stakeholders in programme design (ESG 1.2)
- Trends in evaluating and adjusting pedagogy (ESG 1.3)
- Trends in library and resource development (ESG 1.6)
- Trends in recommendations and requirements – critical areas that need training? (ESG 2.6)
- Trends in VET competences – how ‘wide is their expertise’? Widen it if necessary. (ESG 2.4)
- The involvement of alumni in international theological education in programme design (ESG 1.2)
- Areas of least compliance in reporting on ESG 1 standards in international theological education (ESG 2.6)
- June 2021 - production of 2021 thematic analysis
- August 2021 – follow-up on actions from 2020 thematic analysis and collection of responses through Addendum in APR. Publication of additional data and responses.
- June 2022 - production of 2022 thematic analysis
- August 2022 – follow-up on actions from 2020 thematic analysis and collection of responses through Addendum in APR. Publication of additional data and responses.
- June 2023 - production of 2023 thematic analysis
- August 2023 – follow-up on actions from 2020 thematic analysis and collection of responses through Addendum in APR. Publication of additional data and responses.
- June 2024 - production of 2024 thematic analysis
- August 2024 – follow-up on actions from 2020 thematic analysis and collection of responses through Addendum in APR. Publication of additional data and responses.
- June 2025 - production of 2025 thematic analysis
- August 2025 – follow-up on actions from 2020 thematic analysis and collection of responses through Addendum in APR. Publication of additional data and responses.
- November 2025 – selection of themes for thematic analyses 2026-2030 and revision of strategic plan (Council)
- Etc...

5. SOURCES OF THIS DOCUMENT

- ESG
- ESG 2015-18 ENQA Agency Reports: Thematic Analysis¹
- EQAR Guidelines for Applicants

¹ [ESG 2015-18 ENQA Agency Reports: Thematic Analysis](#)

6. THEMATIC ANALYSIS CONDUCTED IN 2020

Theme	Reflection on	Improvement of	QA policies	QA processes	Institutional context	National context	International contexts	Shows developments	Shows trends	Shows areas of good practice	Shows areas of persistent difficulty	How the outcomes will be used
Development of teaching staff (ESG 1.5)		x		X	X				X	x		To improve processes and remove developmental barriers
Gender distribution in theological education	z						X			x	X	To determine strategies for greater gender representation
Perspectives of VET members (ESG 2.4)		X		X							X	To determine VET recruiting strategy

This strategic plan has been approved by the ECTE Council, 11 November 2020 and is valid until its revision.

For additional information about the ECTE, contact:
 Dr Marvin Oxenham – General Secretary, ECTE
 Via dei Lucumoni 33 1015 Sutri (VT) Italy
 Email: office@ecte.eu Website: www.ecte.eu