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Digital Solutions for the Recognition Agenda

Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education

23 April 2024

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Global Convention (28 States Parties)

1.6+ million (25%)

of the world's 6.4 million mobile students are hosted by the States Parties



Major actors

in international education



30 Member States

Are reported to be well-advanced with ratification procedures, including countries in all UNESCO regions



Regional conventions

26 out of 28 countries that ratified the Global Convention are States Parties to one or more regional conventions



Andorra



Armenia



Australia



Cabo Verde



Côte d'Ivoire



Croatia



Cuba



Estonia



France



Finland



Guinea



Holy See



Hungary



Iceland



Japan



Lithuania



Nicaragua



Norway



Rep. of Moldova



Romania



Palestine



Senegal



Slovakia



Sweden



Tunisia



UK



Uruguay



Yemen

Global Convention Landscape



- Digital solutions are becoming increasingly important with growing **enrollments** (254 million), student **mobility** (6.4 million) and the experience of the **COVID-19** pandemic to ensure access, inclusion and affordability
- Key areas of the **interim work programme** (2024-2025) – operational guidelines, subsidiary text on the relationship between the Global Convention and regional conventions, research, capacity development, advocacy
- Main **research** areas – quality assurance, including transnational education, and the recognition of refugee qualifications and the development of complementary pathways

Provisions in the Global Convention

Digitalization and digital solutions are not directly mentioned in the Convention, however:

- “States Parties commit to adopting measures to **eradicate all forms of fraudulent practices** regarding higher education qualifications by encouraging the use of contemporary **technologies** and networking activities among Parties” (Article III.8)
- “Each State Party shall encourage the use of **technologies** to ensure easy **access to information** (Article VIII.3)
- With provisions on **non-traditional learning modes**, the Global Convention opens the doors for the recognition of qualifications, partial studies and prior learning obtained through online and other digital means (Articles IV to VI)

Recommendations from the LRC Monitoring Report that may be scaled up

- **different ways of implementing** online digital solutions for recognition and appropriate **resources** should be allocated in the sector in view of the rise in mobility and trends in digitalization
- different digital solutions adopted at national and institutional level should be **open, accessible, interoperable and interconnected**, taking into account common assessment criteria and reports
- the application of **agreed and secure systems of digital certification and communication**, such as blockchain, should be encouraged;
- national authorities and national legislation should ensure that digital solutions are **fully compliant with international standards** for privacy and data protection and that the **learner has control** over what they wish to share and for how long;

Recommendations from the LRC Monitoring Report that may be scaled

up

- national authorities and higher education institutions should develop **digital strategies** that ensure inclusivity of tools and interoperability of digital technologies to allow integration and synergies of different systems
- any digital solution adopted should ensure that information is shared and student data is exchanged in a **secured, reliable and simple way**
- **verification** of authenticity and of the identity of the holder should be possible in a trustworthy manner, in accordance with the international standards in the field (such as self-sovereign identity)
- national recognition authorities should establish **archives** to store applicants' documents for comparison purposes and as a means of preventing recognition of fraudulent documents
- the digital ecosystem should respect the **right to appeal** and grant the possibility to review recognition decisions according to the outcome of the appeal procedure.

General resources

- UNESCO Strategy on Technological Innovation in Education (2022-2025): <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000378847>
- Recommendation on the Ethics of AI: <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/recommendation-ethics-artificial-intelligence>
- Recommendation on Open Educational Resources: <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/recommendation-open-educational-resources-oer>
- Guidelines for ITC Education Policies and Master Plans: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380926>
- AI and Education: Guidance for Policymakers: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000376709>
- Education and Blockchain: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000384003>



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