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**INITIAL SPECIAL REPORTS SUBMITTED BY MEMBER STATES  
ON THE ACTION TAKEN BY THEM TO IMPLEMENT THE  
RECOMMENDATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF STUDIES  
AND QUALIFICATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION,  
ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL CONFERENCE  
AT ITS TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION**

**SUMMARY**

This document reproduces the only six initial special reports forwarded by Member States as at 8 August 1995 on the action taken by them upon the above-mentioned Recommendation.

## Introduction

1. On 13 November 1993 at its twenty-seventh session the General Conference adopted the Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education. Copies of this instrument were transmitted to Member States on 17 June 1994.
2. Subsequently, and in accordance with the 'Rules of Procedure concerning recommendations to Member States and international conventions covered by the terms of Article IV, paragraph 4, of the Constitution', the Director-General forwarded to Member States on 13 March 1995 a letter requesting them to send the initial special reports on the action taken by them upon this Recommendation. These reports had to reach the Director-General within the time-limit prescribed by the said Rules of Procedure, that is, no later than 1 August 1995.
3. As at 8 August 1995, special reports on the Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education had been received from six Member States.
4. Under the terms of Articles 17, 18 and 19 of the said Rules of Procedure the General Conference is required to consider the initial special reports submitted by Member States in connection with the Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education and to embody its comments in one or more general reports, which shall be transmitted to Member States, to the United Nations, to National Commissions and to any other authorities specified by the General Conference.
5. Taking into account that some more Member States engaged themselves through relevant correspondence to follow UNESCO procedure in regard to the matter, the Secretariat will, if necessary, distribute the addendum to the present document before the opening of the twenty-eight session of the General Conference.

## NORWAY

1. The Recommendation has been submitted to the competent national authority.
2. The competent national authority is the Royal Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs.
3. The following steps have been taken:
  - (1) The Ministry has submitted the Recommendation to the individual institutions of higher education in Norway. This ensures a widespread distribution of the Recommendation.
  - (2) Under the current legislation migrant workers who have completed university or college studies in other countries may apply to have these studies evaluated for possible credit within the Norwegian degree system. The application should be sent to the National Academic Information Centre (NAIC) which acts as an information centre in matters regarding international education and recognition. Universities and university colleges recognize education which is equivalent to education within their own system, while the Ministry recognizes education equivalent to degrees awarded by the State colleges.

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- (3) Migrant workers who hold professions which are protected by law in Norway must apply to the responsible authorities to be recognized and certified for certain jobs. This applies to, for instance, medical doctors, nurses, dentists and physiotherapists. The Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs certifies teachers.
- (4) Following the new act on universities and colleges which was passed in April 1995 and comes into effect 1 January 1996, the institutions of higher education themselves recognize education that is equivalent to education within their own degree system. The difference between the current legislation and the new Act is that under the new Act the State colleges are given equal authority to universities and university colleges when it comes to recognizing foreign education.
- (5) On 2 June 1988 Norway signed and ratified the Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees concerning Higher Education in the States belonging to the Europe Region (1979).

### **FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY**

1. The Recommendation has been submitted to the competent national authority.
2. The competent national authority is the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Lander in the Federal Republic of Germany.
3. **This** authority has taken the following steps to give effect to the Recommendation.
4. The above-mentioned Recommendation has been submitted to the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany. The Secretariat of the Standing Conference has made a translation and transmitted it to the Ministries and to the German Rectors' Conference. Details on the implementation will be discussed by the competent bodies of the Standing Conference in co-operation with the German Rectors' Conference. As far as this Recommendation is in conformity with German legislation it shall be considered when those regulations are altered.

### **SWITZERLAND**

1. The Recommendation has been submitted to the competent national authorities.
2. Higher education is the responsibility in the first instance of the cantons. With respect to university policy, the Federal Constitution (Article 27, para. 1) authorizes the Confederation only to subsidize cantonal universities, apart from its own graduate schools. In other words, the Confederation acts only in the subsidiary capacity of donor, and its only responsibilities result from that function (determining grant criteria). (Message concerning the promotion of science during the period 1996 to 1999, p. 21.)
3. The competent national authorities have taken measures to give effect to the Recommendation.
4. It should be noted that the Swiss University Conference has published the Recommendation in the 'International conventions to encourage mobility and settle issues of academic recognition' handbook, Bern, 1995. Extensive distribution is therefore ensured. In addition:

Council of Europe and UNESCO conventions and recommendations, which tend to be worded rather generally, are currently clarified and complemented by bilateral conventions, in particular with neighboring States (the provisional limitation to neighboring States is primarily because the need is greatest there; furthermore, comparability of the education systems facilitates negotiations).

Convention between the Republic of Austria and the Swiss Confederation on mutual recognition of equivalence in higher education (signed 10 November 1993, entered into force by an exchange of notes 1 October 1994).

Agreement between the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Government of the Swiss Confederation on mutual recognition of equivalence in university studies (signed 20 June 1994, entered into force 1 July 1995).

France-Swiss framework agreement between the Conference of University Vice-Chancellors (CPU) and the Conference of Rectors of Swiss Universities (CRUS) on recognition of diplomas and validation of experience (signed and entered into force 30 April 1994).

There are plans to enter into talks with Italy for initial discussions on equivalence.

The Conference of Rectors of Swiss Universities has complemented its guidelines for the evaluation of Swiss and foreign diplomas leading to admission to the universities and graduate schools of Switzerland of 31 January 1992, with supplements of 17 February 1994.

The Central University Office has created, on the instructions of the Confederation, an international service for information on questions of recognition. Priority in its activities goes to advice to universities and institutions on matters of international academic recognition and on participation in specialized commissions and international networks.

## **BULGARIA**

1. The Recommendation has been submitted to the competent national authority.
2. The competent national authority is the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.
3. The Recommendation has been translated into Bulgarian and sent to every higher education establishment and educational institution. The Council of Ministers adopted Decision 569/28.12.94, the purpose of which was to accept the Recommendation and inform UNESCO of its acceptance.

## **SLOVAK REPUBLIC**

1. The Recommendation has been submitted to the competent national authority.
2. The competent national authority is the State executive: Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic.
3. This authority has not taken steps to give effect to the Recommendation because existing legislation already adequately cover the subject of the Recommendation.

## NEW ZEALAND

1. The Recommendation has been submitted to the competent national authorities.
2. The competent national authorities are the:
  - New Zealand Qualifications Authority
  - New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee
  - New Zealand Association of Polytechnics
  - Teachers Registration Board
  - New Zealand Council for Teacher Education
  - New Zealand Universities
  - New Zealand Polytechnics
  - New Zealand Colleges of Teacher Education
  - New Zealand Education International Ltd.
3. There are in place in New Zealand legislation, regulations and measures which either adequately comply with the provisions of this Recommendation or are being developed to give effect to the provisions of the Recommendation.
4. On receipt of the Recommendation by national competent authorities in August 1994, authorities have taken the following steps to give effect to the Recommendation:

participated in the third session of the Regional Committee on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 14-16 December 1994;

continued to give consideration to New Zealand becoming a signatory to the Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Degrees and Diplomas in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific;

continued working through existing international arrangements, e.g. Closer Economic Relations (CER), General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and Asia and Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) to promote provisions of the Recommendation, in particular, 8,9, 11,20 and 22;

continued to work to establish comparable policies with respect to the evaluation of qualifications (13 and 14);

established the New Zealand Universities Academic Unit to maintain and enhance the quality of the universities' academic activities and develop links with similar bodies overseas;

established the New Zealand Polytechnic Programmed Committee to assist the New Zealand Qualifications Authority in providing quality assurance in the polytechnic sector;

accredited selected New Zealand polytechnics to provide undergraduate courses and issue degree qualifications;

sought to inform appropriate authorities overseas about the New Zealand qualifications system, in general, and about specific institutions and their qualifications;

sought to convince overseas authorities of the professional integrity and standards of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority;

supported New Zealand becoming a member of UNESCO's Asia and the Pacific Higher Education Network;

convened a UNESCO Regional Meeting for UNEVOC on Technical and Vocational Education Policy, Planning and Implementation, 2-9 April 1995;

worked towards achieving further bilateral agreements with Australian States for the mutual recognition of teachers.



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### **ADDENDUM**

#### **INITIAL SPECIAL REPORTS SUBMITTED BY MEMBER STATES ON THE ACTION TAKEN BY THEM TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF STUDIES AND QUALIFICATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION, ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL CONFERENCE AT ITS TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION**

Page 6, add text as follows:

#### **REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

1. The above-mentioned recommendation has been submitted to the competent national authority.
2. The competent national authority is the Ministry of Education, Republic of Korea.
3. This authority has taken steps to give effect to the recommendation.
4. The steps that have been taken include the translation of the recommendation into this country's language and its widespread distribution to schools.

#### **MOROCCO**

1. The above-mentioned recommendation has been submitted to the competent national authority.
2. The competent national authority in Morocco is the Ministry of Higher Education, Executive Training and Scientific Research.

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3. The competent authority has taken steps to give effect to the recommendation by submitting it to the parties concerned by its implementation in order to have their opinion.

4. The measures taken include the distribution of the recommendation to:

university-level establishments of higher education;

public higher education establishments not coming under the university; and

professional organizations (national association of doctors, national association of pharmacists, national association of dental surgeons, national association of lawyers, national association of architects, national association of veterinarians, national association of surveyors and national association of accountants.

This consultation will therefore cover about 100 professional establishments and organizations and time will be needed to exploit and collate the information.

### **SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC**

By letter of 16 September 1995, the Syrian National Commission for UNESCO informed the Director-General that the Higher Education Council of the Syrian Arab Republic had approved, by decision 78, the Draft Universal Convention on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education. With regard to implementation of the Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education, approved by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-seventh session, the Syrian National Commission also informed the Director-General that the decisions of the Higher Education Council were in keeping with most of the provisions of this recommendation and complied with its basic principles.