



UNESCO'S NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR THE RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS AT THE GLOBAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

THE REGIONAL CONVENTION ON THE RECOGNITION OF STUDIES, DEGREES AND DIPLOMAS

is an instrument that commits the States Parties to recognize the studies, degrees and diplomas of the countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region, according to the terms of the Convention, the subsequent consensus derived from it, and their own national legislations. Its ratification seeks, as an ultimate goal, to contribute to the strengthening of the quality of the national higher education systems through of the right to education, inclusion and the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goal 4 agenda and its commitment "leave no one behind". It was adopted at the International Conference of States in Buenos Aires, Argentina in June 2019.

The Convention was approved by 26 signatory member States and signed by 13. It will enter into force once four States ratify it. Peru and Grenada have ratified the Convention by January 2021.

What are the Convention's main features?

It commits the signatory member States to take the necessary measures to ensure that higher education studies, diplomas and degrees are evaluated and recognized.

The Convention stipulates that:

- Applications for recognition should be assessed in a fair and timely manner;
- Recognition should be granted unless a substantial difference can be demonstrated.

Through national information centers, competent authorities should disseminate information on their respective education systems, including:

- Quality assurance practices
- Lists of officially recognized educational institutions
- Officially recognized Academic programs

For the full text of the agreement, go to <http://portal.unesco.org/en>



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What are the benefits of ratifying the recognition agreement?



For the students:

It would allow access to reliable and updated information on the region's higher education systems.

It would generate confidence that studies and degrees will be validated and recognized in a convenient manner and within a reasonable time.

It would guarantee procedures that support the recognition of studies and degrees for people without sufficient or verifiable documentation, as in the case of non-voluntary migrants, refugees and displaced persons.



For the competent evaluating institutions:

It would provide standardized definitions and evaluation criteria and up-to-date information on national higher education systems that facilitates and expedites and expedite the work of authorities.



For governments:

It would express its commitment to promoting international collaboration by improving academic mobility and promoting good practices in the assessment and recognition of academic credentials.

GLOBAL CONVENTION ON THE RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION

For the United Nations, this Convention is the first instrument on higher education with a global scope. It will be implemented in synergy with regional conventions in Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and North America, and Latin America and the Caribbean, with the aim of strengthening and supporting already established good practices. The Global Convention has been developed to facilitate inter-regional university mobility and to benefit those who seek to have their degrees and diplomas recognized outside their region of origin, either to access higher education or to continue their studies.

Why do we need a global convention?

- To increase inter-regional student mobility.
- For transparent and fair recognition of qualifications.
- To improve the quality of higher education.
- To create and maintain international consistency in recognition processes.

THE UNESCO INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (IESALC)

It is the only specialized institute of the United Nations system with the objective of contributing to the improvement of higher education in the Member States. Its work program is approved biannually by UNESCO's General Conference.

Mission

The Institute's mission is to contribute to the development of the national higher education systems of Member States and their institutions, helping to ensure their relevance, quality, efficiency and equity, promoting regional and international cooperation and the participation of all stakeholders.

In its role as Regional Secretariat of the former Convention (Mexico, 1974), UNESCO-IESALC is committed to offer technical assistance to Ministries of Higher Education or their equivalent bodies; to develop the necessary tools to facilitate the operationalization of the Convention and to establish alliances to share experiences and best practices in order to achieve the ratification of these important instruments for the strengthening of higher education.



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INVENTORY OF REAL CASES

"I DIDN'T WANT TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL; I WAS ASHAMED TO GO BACK TO LEVELS I HAD ALREADY PASSED"

Jamerson illustrates the reality of many Haitians with vocational technical higher education, or with completed secondary education qualifications, that are not recognized, so they have to attend two years, and sometimes more, of secondary education, as if they had not completed such a level of education.

MARLENE IS A LAWYER GRADUATED FROM THE UNIVERSIDAD DE LOS ANDES WITH 13 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN VENEZUELA

She arrived in Colombia and with a loan, paid for a semester at the University of Antioquia and completed the validation of her degree as required by the Ministry of Education. When she received her certificate, she gathered the rest of the requirements and started the validation process. Two months later, she received a communication informing that she did not meet the requirements: she lacked the certificate of the academic hours, of the mode of study and of the result of the training. Marlene had indeed not sent these documents, because in the case of the hours for each subject, the information was in the study plan, the mode of study was clear within the program that mentioned oral mid-term exams, expositions and on-site evaluations, and the result of the evaluation was in the document that qualified her as a lawyer. The Ministry of Education granted a 30-day extension to gather the missing documents, so Marlene decided to abandon the process since it was impossible for her to return to Venezuela and request documents.

"IT WILL TAKE ME LONGER TO VALIDATE MY DEGREE THAN TO TAKE THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM THROUGH WHICH I OBTAINED IT"

Carlos is Colombian and has just returned to his country after completing a master's degree in international law at the University of Leiden, the Netherlands. He entered the enabled virtual platform to request the recognition of his degree and attached all the required documentation. However, the process, which should take less than two months, has already taken nine, during which time he has only received communications requesting him to add additional documents that the university where he studied does not issue.

SARA IS ITALIAN AND STUDIES LANGUAGES, SHE WOULD LIKE TO IMPROVE HER ARABIC IN JORDAN

Sara faces several difficulties before deciding to study outside her country: she can't find reliable online information, there are no specialized people who can answer her questions, nor people from the officially recognized competent authorities - governmental or not - who can answer her questions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON STUDY RECOGNITION AGREEMENTS VISIT:
<https://www.iesalc.unesco.org/en/>