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Towards the implementation of the Global Recognition Convention

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UNESCO's global ecosystem for recognition of qualifications



Global Convention – Background and rationale



- Adopted by UNESCO's General Conference in November 2019 as the **first UN treaty on higher education** with a global scope.
- More than **235 million** people are currently enrolled in higher education globally.
- **6.3 million are international students** – a number that has more than doubled in the past 20 years and is likely to double again in the next two decades.
- 50 % of these **study outside their home region**.
- The Global Convention establishes **universal principles** for the recognition of studies and will enhance physical and virtual **academic mobility** everywhere.
- It is open to UNESCO Member States and the Holy See.

Global Convention – Recent developments



- **Entered into force** in March 2023.
- **1st Intergovernmental Conference** of the States Parties convened in July 2023 in Paris, mandated with promoting the application of the convention overseeing its implementation.
- **Bureau** – Norway (Chair), Côte d'Ivoire, Estonia, Nicaragua, Japan, Tunisia, UK (VPs), Holy See (Rapporteur)
- The revised interim **work programme for the Global Convention** has been elaborated by a Working Group of States Parties and will be tabled at an extraordinary session on 7 March 2024.
- **Key areas** – operational guidelines, subsidiary text on the relationship between the Global Convention and regional conventions, research, capacity development, advocacy.

27 countries have ratified (as of January 2024)

1.6+ million (25%)

of the world's 6.3 million mobile students
are hosted by the States Parties



Major actors

in international education



+ 20 Member States

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



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



Slovakia



Sweden



Tunisia



United Kingdom



Uruguay



Yemen



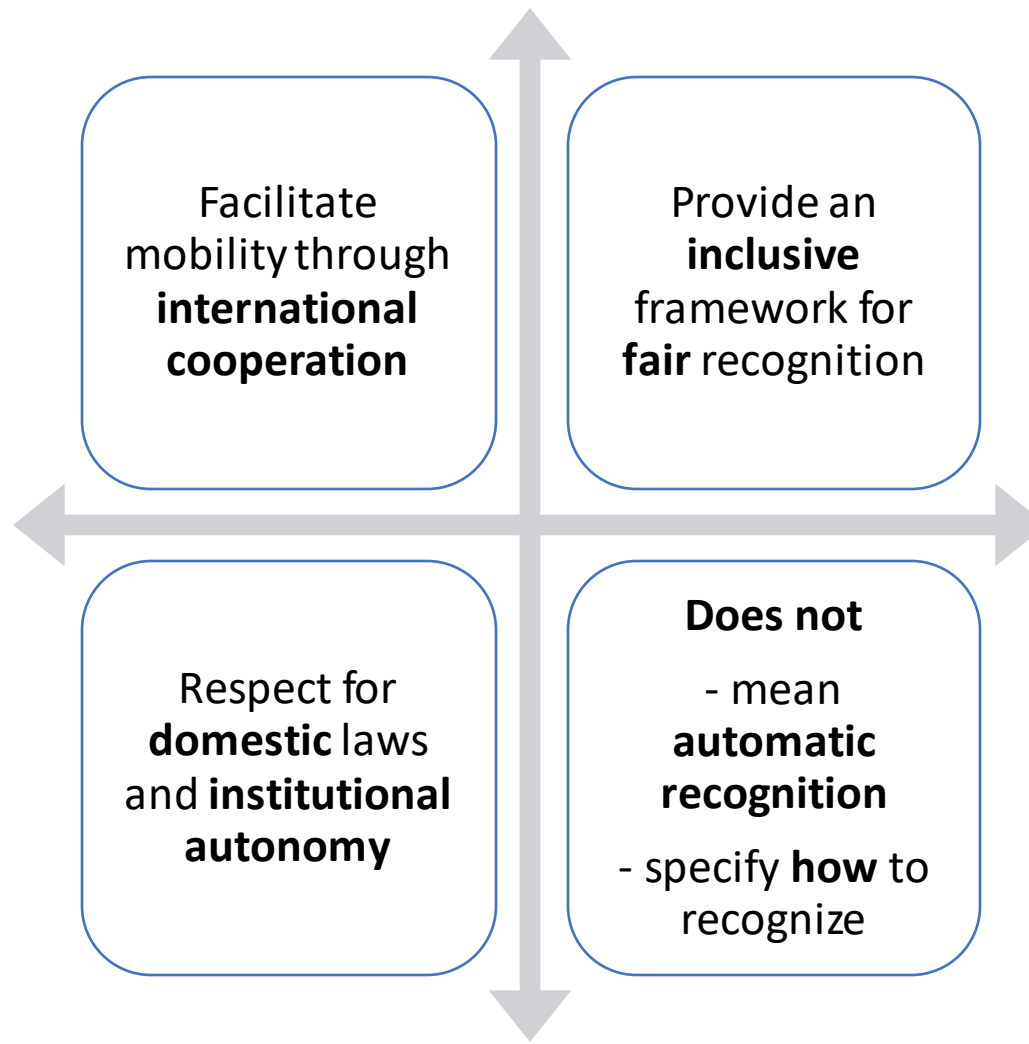
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Education
2030

Global Convention States Parties and regional conventions

	Global Convention	Addis Convention	Arab States Convention	Tokyo Convention	Buenos Aires Convention	Lisbon Convention
ANDORRA	2022					2008
ARMENIA	2022			2021		2005
AUSTRALIA	2022			2014		2002
CABO VERDE	2022	2022				
CÔTE D'IVOIRE	2022					
CROATIA	2021					2002
CUBA	2022				2021	
ESTONIA	2021					1998
FINLAND	2023					1998
FRANCE	2021					1999
GUINEA	2023 (deposited)	2019				
HOLY SEE	2021	2019		2018	2023	2001
HUNGARY	2023 (deposited)					2000
ICELAND	2022					2001
JAPAN	2022			2017		
LITHUANIA	2022					1998
NICARAGUA	2020					
NORWAY	2020					1999
PALESTINE	2022		2022			
ROMANIA	2021					1999
REP. OF MOLDOVA	2024 (deposited)					1999
SLOVAKIA	2022					1999
SWEDEN	2022					2001
TUNISIA	2021					
UNITED KINGDOM	2022					2003
URUGUAY	2023				2022	
YEMEN	2023		2023			

Objectives of the Global Convention



Main Principles of the Global Convention

Individuals' **right to assessment** of their qualifications for applying for studies or employment.

Timely and affordable assessment.

States Parties shall recognize:

- qualifications giving access to higher education
- higher education qualifications
- partial studies
- prior learning
- qualifications acquired through non-traditional learning modes
- qualifications of refugees/displaced persons, even in cases where documentation is lacking

unless **substantial differences can be shown**.

= Differences that would **prevent** the applicant from succeeding with further studies or work.

➔ **Burden of proof** on competent authorities and gives individuals the **right to appeal**.

States Parties must provide information on their higher education system, qualifications and quality assurance mechanisms and **establish a national information centre**.

Implementation structures:

- National implementation structures
- Networks of national structures
- Organizations for accreditation, quality assurance, qualifications frameworks and recognition
- Intergovernmental Conference
- Committees of regional conventions

Relationship with the regional conventions

They are implemented in **complementarity**, and one does not supersede the other.

For implementation structures:

- Heads of the regional recognition convention committees participate in the Intergovernmental Conference of the States Parties to the Global Convention (Article XV.3)
- Committees of the regional conventions will be consulted on important decisions (Article XV.8)
- Networks of national information centres are identified as key implementation structures of the Global Convention (Article XII)

For recognition decisions:

- States Parties shall take into account the relevant provisions of the Global Convention when interpreting and applying the regional recognition conventions (Article XIX.2);
- However, nothing in the Global Convention shall be deemed to derogate from any provisions *more favourable to recognition* (Article XIX.4).

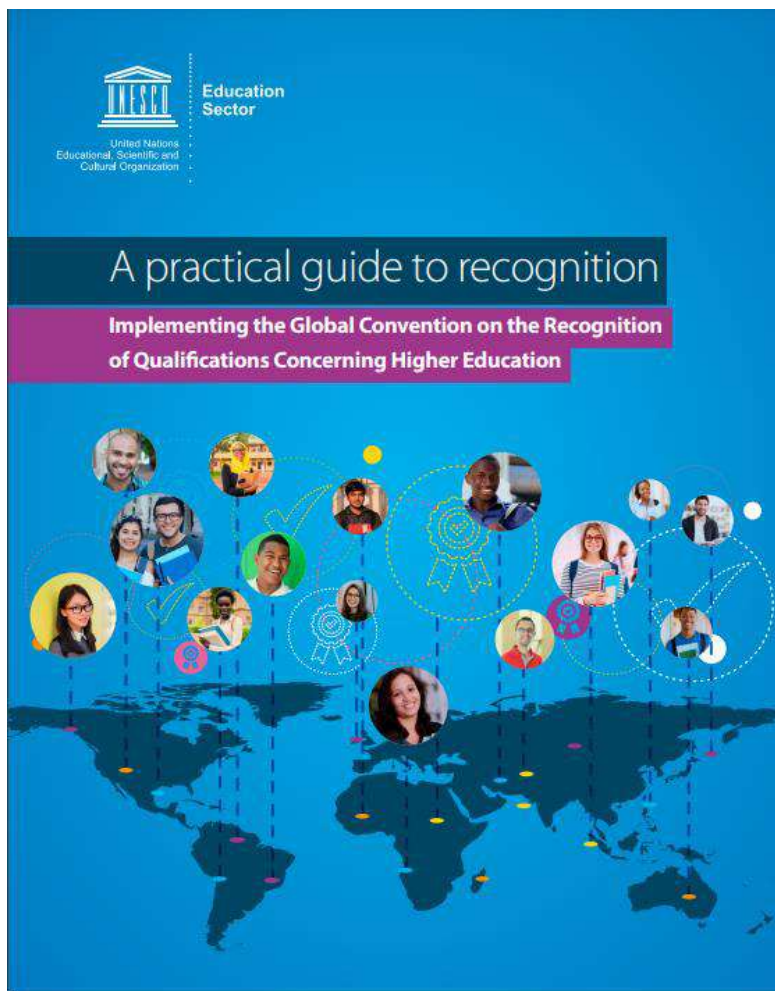


Why should countries ratify the Global Convention?



- To facilitate recognition for students going abroad and returning home
- To showcase to the world that they have a strong and forward-looking higher education system
- To share their experiences in improving higher education provision and to network with other systems globally
- To attract international cooperation, exchanges, mobility with other higher education students, faculty and researchers
- To promote themselves as destinations for learning excellence
- To join the leadership of higher education developments at the global level

Useful Resources



- **What is the Global Convention on Higher Education?** (benefits, how to ratify it, how to implement it)
www.unesco.org/en/education/higher-education/global-convention/about
- **A Practical Guide to Recognition**
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374905>
- **Resolutions** of the first Intergovernmental Conference of the States Parties to the Global Convention (2023)
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000386727>
- **Extraordinary session** of the Intergovernmental Conference of the States Parties (2024)
www.unesco.org/en/articles/extraordinary-session-intergovernmental-conference-states-parties-global-convention-higher-education
- **Model instrument of ratification** for all UNESCO conventions <https://www.unesco.org/en/node/66846>

Thank you

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Learn more: www.unesco.org/education

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www.unesco.org/en/higher-education/global-convention

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