Creating More Transparency and Mutual Understanding on Recognition, Validation and Quality
A Perspective from the Groningen Declaration Network

ASEM Education Action Plan 2030 - Online Workshop 1
19 February 2021, 09:30 – 12:30 CET

Establishing ASEM Expert Group on Digitalization

May 2019, ASEMME7, Bucharest, Romania

ASEM Education Ministers invited Senior Officials to establish an *expert group on the transversal topic of digitalisation* to foster dialogue and synergies on activities in the field of digital learning and teaching

Composition of Expert Group

Target Group

- academic experts (from universities and research institutes)

- digitalisation experts from NGOs involved in education

- representatives from student bodies

Appointing the Experts

- ASEM member states participating in the Expert Group are responsible for identifying and recruiting experts from their respective countries

12 December 2019, Berlin – Inaugural meeting of Expert Group

Brought together 11 national experts from Austria, Belgium (Flanders), China, European Commission, France, India, Latvia, the Netherlands, Romania, the Russian Federation and Thailand and 7 NGO experts from CEDEFOP, DAAD, ESN, ETF, EUA, GDN and SEAMEO RIHED

Aims of the EG

The Expert Group is to

- provide a *pool of digitalisation experts* specifically working within the ASEM education context;

- formulate *policy recommendations for the ASEM Strategy 2030 and ASEMME8*, focusing on digitalisation;

- draw up *recommendations for conceptualising new ASEM* initiatives focusing on digital learning and teaching;

- foster *dialogue on the potential of digitalisation in (higher) education*, with specific regard to the ***four priority areas of the ASEM Education Process***:

    - 1) Quality Assurance and Recognition

    - 2) Engaging Business and Industry in Education

    - 3) Balanced Mobility

    - 4) Lifelong Learning including TVET

- strengthen collaboration and connectivity by *identifying and promoting good practices of international education cooperation between Asia and Europe.*

Asia-Europe Meeting
ASEM Education

Current work of the Expert Group

Production of Position Paper

Annex to the new ASEM Education Strategy, to be presented at the next ASEM Education Ministerial Meeting ASEMME8.

Will present the challenges and opportunities digital transformation entails for Asia-Europe cooperation and provides recommendations

for policy makers on how to address these issues in order to make international educational cooperation fit for the future

Identification of Priority Areas for Asia-Europe Education Cooperation in the Digital Era

1. Digital Infrastructure

2. International Exchange and Mobility

3. Lifelong Learning including TVET

4. Quality Assurance and Recognition

Possible AEP contributions to create more trust & transparency w/r to *digital credentialing*

Showcase existing (inter)national learner data systems and infrastructures and their capacity in Asia-Pacific and Europe, such as

(Asia/Pacific = black, Europe = blue)

- **AUS/N**Z My eQuals -

- **Canada**'s ARUCC National Network #MyCreds

- **China** ongoing developments through CHESICC CHSI Website

- **EBSI** European Blockchain Services Infrastructure https://lnkd.in/dAdpXv3

- **EDCI** Europass Digital Credentials Initiative https://lnkd.in/eNrtBjB

- **India**'s NAD National Academic Database and DigiLocker

- **Japan**'s National Japanese Credential Wallet spearheaded by RECSIE http://recsie.or.jp/

- **Netherlands** Diplomaregister https://lnkd.in/eT64WqQ

- **Norway**'s Diploma Registry https://lnkd.in/ecGVWmF

- **Singapore**'s OpenCerts https://www.opencerts.io/

- **United States** LER - Learning & Employment Record https://lnkd.in/eKxbMUW

Possible AEP contributions to create more trust & transparency w/r to digital credentialing cont'd

Promoting Initiatives in the Fields of Global Mobility, Recognition and Accreditation, such as

UNESCO Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education

As presented in opening keynote by Borhene Chakroun - *https://en.unesco.org/themes/higher-education/recognition-qualifications/global-convention*

Tokyo Regional Convention

Brings together Asian stakeholders with established or starting digital credentialing capabilities and an interest in promoting the transition to digital credentialing - *https://apnnic.net/tokyo_convention_overview/*

Lisbon Recognition Convention – currently 55 member states brought together in the ENIC-NARIC network - https://www.enic-naric.net; EAR manual http://ear.enic-naric.net/emanual/

Rome Declaration (EHEA Ministerial Meeting) September 2020

"Digital solutions will facilitate secure, efficient and transparent exchange of data. Joint digital approaches to enhance recognition, quality assurance and mobility are needed. We ask the BFUG to map existing and find new solutions to enhance the interoperability of digital systems and the exchange of student and institutional data in full respect of privacy and security, taking into account the experiences of the European Student Card Initiative and other initiatives." - *https://ehea2020rome.it/storage/uploads/5d29d1cd-4616-4dfe-a2af-29140a02ec09/BFUG_Final_Draft_Rome_Communique-link.pdf*

Possible AEP contributions to create more trust & transparency w/r to digital credentialing cont'd

Promoting Initiatives in the Fields of Global Mobility, Recognition and Accreditation, such as

DigiRec and its sequel DigiNet

Explores the relationship between digital student data and the recognition of foreign qualifications. The leading question being: *"How can digital student data solutions and digitization of the credential evaluation process support fair and smooth recognition in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention?" - https://www.nuffic.nl/sites/default/files/2020-08/digital-student-data-and-recognition.pdf*

HEIDI - Higher Education Interoperable Data Initiative

Investigates the interoperability of digital systems and the exchange of student and institutional data, in full respect of privacy and security **-** *https://heidirepo.github.io/HEIDI/*

Groningen Declaration Network

Key Facts

- Created in 2012 in the Netherlands, Foundation Status December 2016

- 100+ Signatories from 28 countries, 2180 contacts, 200+ participants

- 12 member board of directors, representing every continent

- Chair: Kathleen Massey, Canada

- Executive Director: Herman de Leeuw (Netherlands)

- Annual convening each spring, rotating continents (2020 India; 2021 Canada; 2022 NL)

- Integrated into and supporting global mobility initiatives world-wide

- Works closely with UNESCO, World Bank/Education and ENIC-NARICs

Groningen Declaration Network cont'd

Operating Values

Maintains a diverse, global and interconnected ecosystem of participants

All participants to commit to:

- learner privacy and data protection

- transparent and responsible practices

- recognition of digital student data and qualifications

Advocates that ALL citizen learners have access to secure digital records of their own educational achievements and can share them with whomever they choose whenever (*learner centricity*)

Supports initiatives dealing with migrant data mobility, resettlement and access to services otherwise denied

Brings resources to bear to address a fundamental lack and imbalance of global data and digital capacity

Groningen Declaration Network cont'd

Operationalizing GDN Goals

- **Annual meeting** brings together authorities and the international community to identify and collaboratively develop new initiatives

- Focused on **best practice sharing** among the attendees:

  - Credential digitalization

  - Credential evaluation

  - Social use cases for international depositories

- Success tied to **creating new pilots and expanding access globally**, examples:

  - AQVN establishment;

  - Australia/NZ digitalization;

  - Multiple US-China Academic portals;

  - EU-US academic portal developments;

  - Canadian National Network;

  - Japan National Network

- Deliver on global data portability through participant commitments

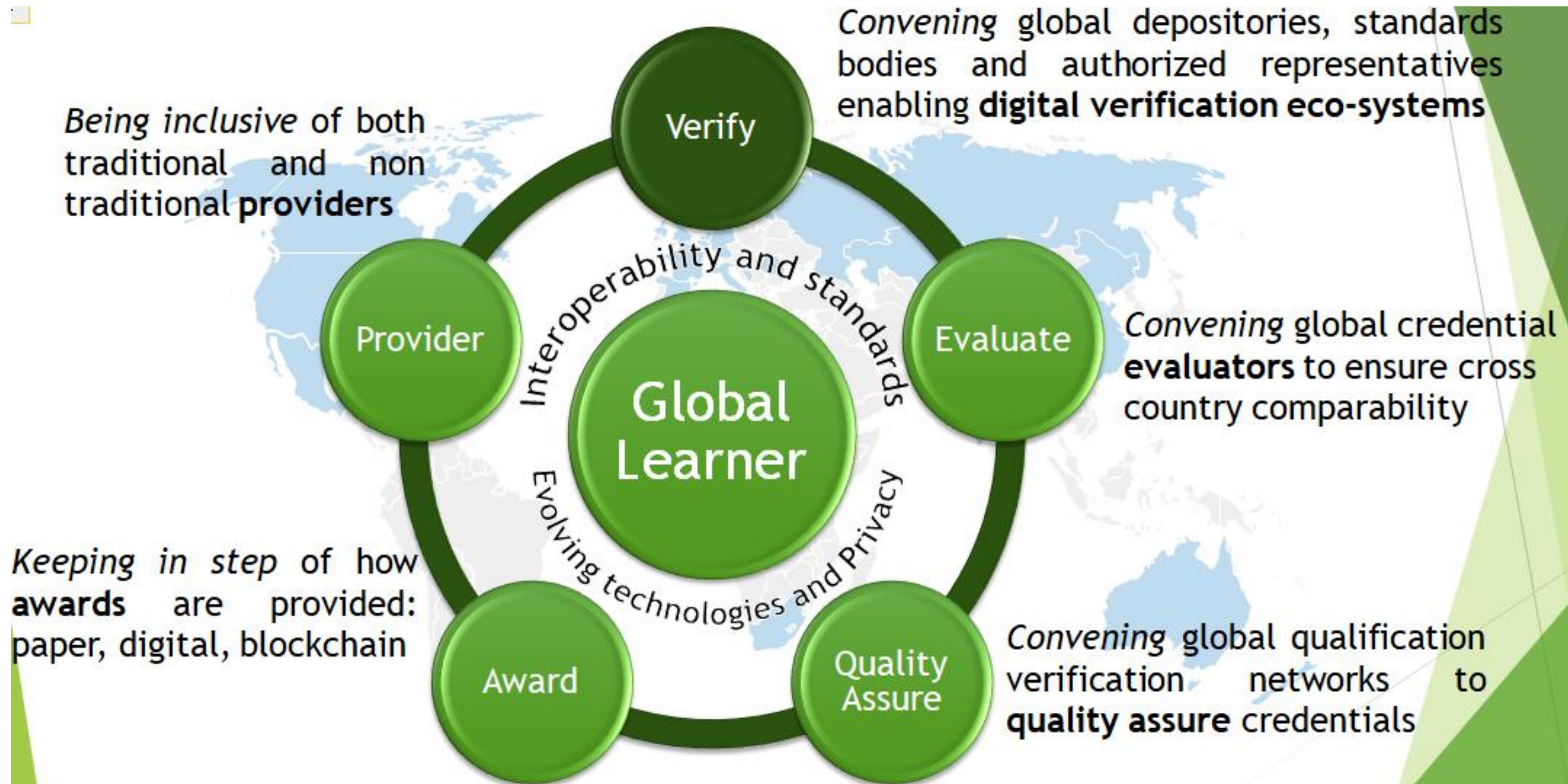- 2020: **Regional strategy** to drive awareness, access and adoption

GDN Principles

We consider the following issues - ownership of data sets; privacy rights, identification; access; consulting; forwarding/sharing; compatibility; comparability; acceptance; and recognition - in order to establish a global area of convergence on digital student data depositories, and we pledge to share best practices in digital secure systems and to co-ordinate our policies on:

- the purpose, feasibility and cost-efficiency of worldwide exchange of digital student data
- the ways to make our systems more compatible, inter alia by looking into semantic interoperability
- the ways to make data more easily comparable
- sharing or forwarding of data through designated systems
- promoting acceptance, for purposes of recognition, of digital student data in lieu of paper documents
- adherence to national or federal privacy rights, both at the sending and at the receiving ends, when data are transferred
- phasing out of paper based documents and of paper based authentications (legalisations) where practicable
- establishment of a Global Standing Secretariat on Digital Student Data Depositories Worldwide, to develop a follow-up structure, consisting of a "consultative group" of representatives of all signatories, plus a smaller "follow-up group", in order to organize future events.

We hereby undertake to attain these objectives within the framework of our respective organisational competencies , thereby fully respecting the diversity of current systems. To that end, we will mutually seek governmental, intergovernmental and/or non-governmental co-operation.

Groningen Declaration Network Vision

Developing a Global Digital Data Eco-system to Further Cross Border Mobility of Learners

Being inclusive of both traditional and non traditional **providers**

Convening global depositories, standards bodies and authorized representatives enabling **digital verification eco-systems**

Convening global credential **evaluators** to ensure cross country comparability

Keeping in step of how **awards** are provided: paper, digital, blockchain

Convening global qualification verification networks to **quality assure** credentials

Verify

Provider

Evaluate

Global Learner

Interoperability and standards

Evolving technologies and Privacy

Award

Quality Assure

Just in case

Contact details

Herman de Leeuw, Executive Director

Groningen Declaration Network

www.groningendeclaration.org

ed@groningendeclaration.org

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https://www.linkedin.com/company/groningen-declaration-network/

Thank you for your attention

Any questions?