

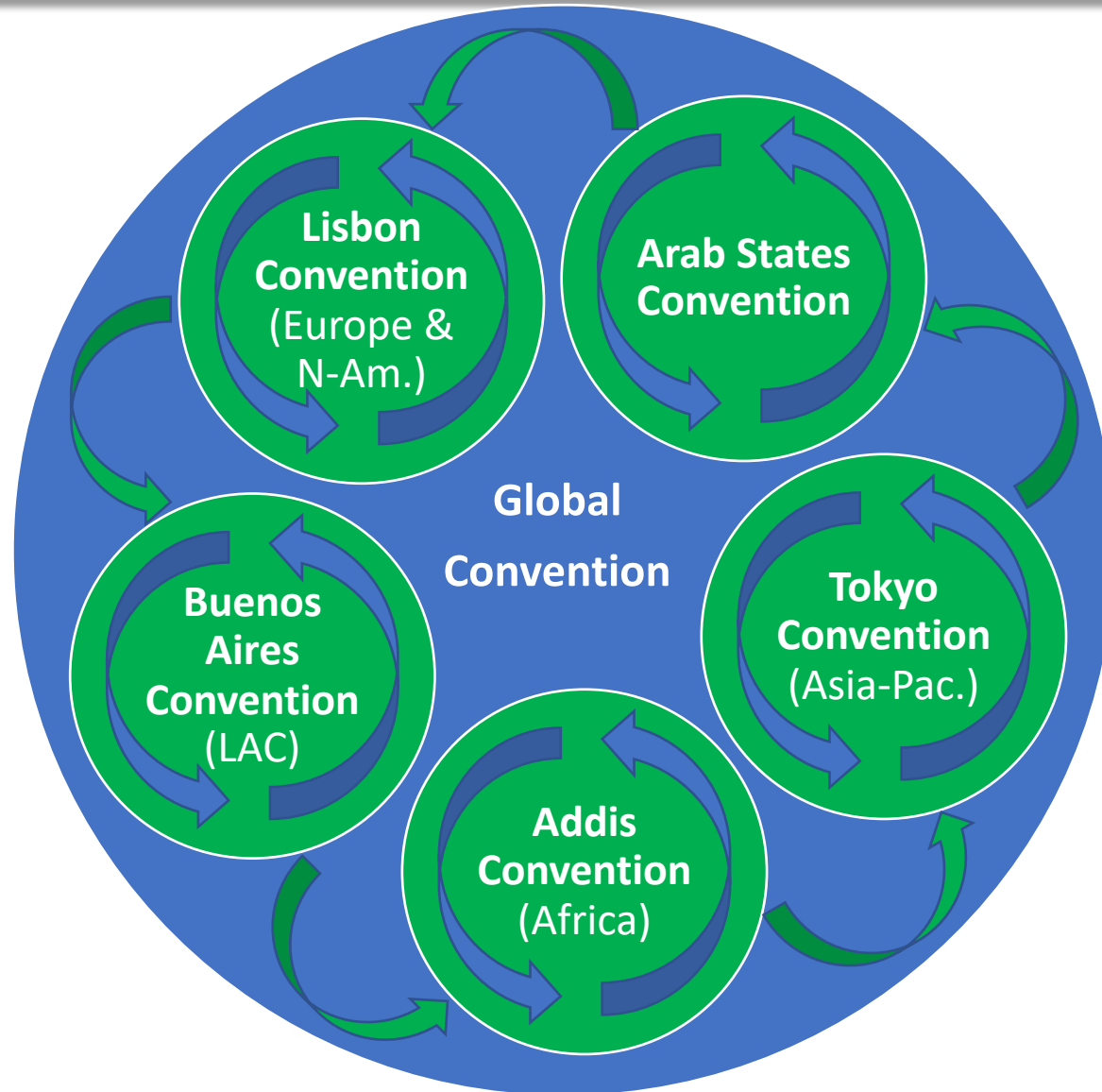


unesco

Global Convention on Recognition and Regional Conventions in the ASEM area: Lisbon and Tokyo Conventions

Andreas Snildal, Secretary to the Global Recognition Convention, Section of Higher Education, UNESCO Education Sector

UNESCO's global ecosystem for recognition of foreign qualifications



Regional recognition conventions in the ASEM area: Lisbon & Tokyo

1997 Lisbon Recognition Convention

- “Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region”;
- Adopted in 1997 as a joint Council of Europe (CoE) and UNESCO convention;
- Open for CoE and UNESCO Member States in Europe Region (incl. North America) + Holy See, and States Parties to the 1979 Convention and the European Cultural Convention;
- 54 States Parties, nearly all European + Holy See, Canada, New Zealand and Australia;
- Supported by [ENIC-NARIC networks](#).

2011 Tokyo Recognition Convention

- “Revised Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education”;
- Adopted in 2011, entered into force in 2018;
- Covers the Asia-Pacific Region, but is open for **all** UNESCO Member States and the Holy See.
- 12 States Parties: Afghanistan, Armenia, Australia, China, Fiji, Holy See, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation and Türkiye;
- Supported by [APNNIC network](#).

Implementation and monitoring

1997 Lisbon Recognition Convention

- Convention Committee meets every 3 years; promotes the application of the Convention and oversees its implementation (last meeting 2022);
- Adopts non-binding recommendations, declarations, protocols and models of good practice to guide national recognition authorities;



2011 Tokyo Recognition Convention

- Convention Committee meets at least every 3 years;
- Fourth Session of the Committee meets 30 November-2 December 2022.

Monitoring implementation of the Tokyo Convention on recognition: a multi-stakeholder approach to the internationalization of higher education in the Asia-Pacific

Wesley R. Teter and Libing Wang

UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, Bangkok, Thailand

Tokyo
Convention on
recognition

157

Received 31 October 2020
Revised 1 February 2021
Accepted 8 February 2021

Abstract

Purpose – The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have transformed the global outlook for international higher education. Given the rapid shift to online learning, the Tokyo Convention in the Asia-Pacific entrusted to UNESCO has become an important policy framework to facilitate regional collaboration, authoritative information sharing and recognition of qualifications across diverse modes of learning. This paper examines the role of the Tokyo Convention to establish an inclusive platform for monitoring and collaborative governance of mobility and internationalization based on fair and transparent recognition policies and practices in the Asia-Pacific.

Design/methodology/approach – In August 2019, a standardized survey instrument was sent by the Secretariat of the Tokyo Convention Committee at UNESCO Bangkok to competent recognition authorities in 46 countries in the Asia-Pacific, including the eight State Parties to the Tokyo Convention that ratified the Convention as of the reporting period. In total, qualitative data from $n = 27$ countries/states was received and analyzed to assess implementation of the Tokyo Convention throughout the region. The research design illustrates how normative instruments such as the Tokyo Convention are monitored and assessed over time.

Findings – A multi-stakeholder approach based on collaborative governance is needed to effectively monitor implementation and implications of the Tokyo Convention for diverse higher education stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region.

Research limitations/implications – Implications include establishing baseline data and methods for monitoring implementation of the Tokyo Convention. Based on collaborative governance theory, the paper explores potential for a multi-stakeholder approach to promote mutual accountability in the Asia-Pacific and to develop mechanisms for inclusive participation in the governance of the forthcoming Global Convention on recognition.

Originality/value – As the first systematic review of its kind, this paper includes a unique dataset and insights into UNESCO's methodology to monitor implementation of standard-setting instruments for qualifications recognition in the Asia-Pacific.

Keywords Tokyo convention, Mutual recognition, Mobility, SDG4

Paper type Technical paper

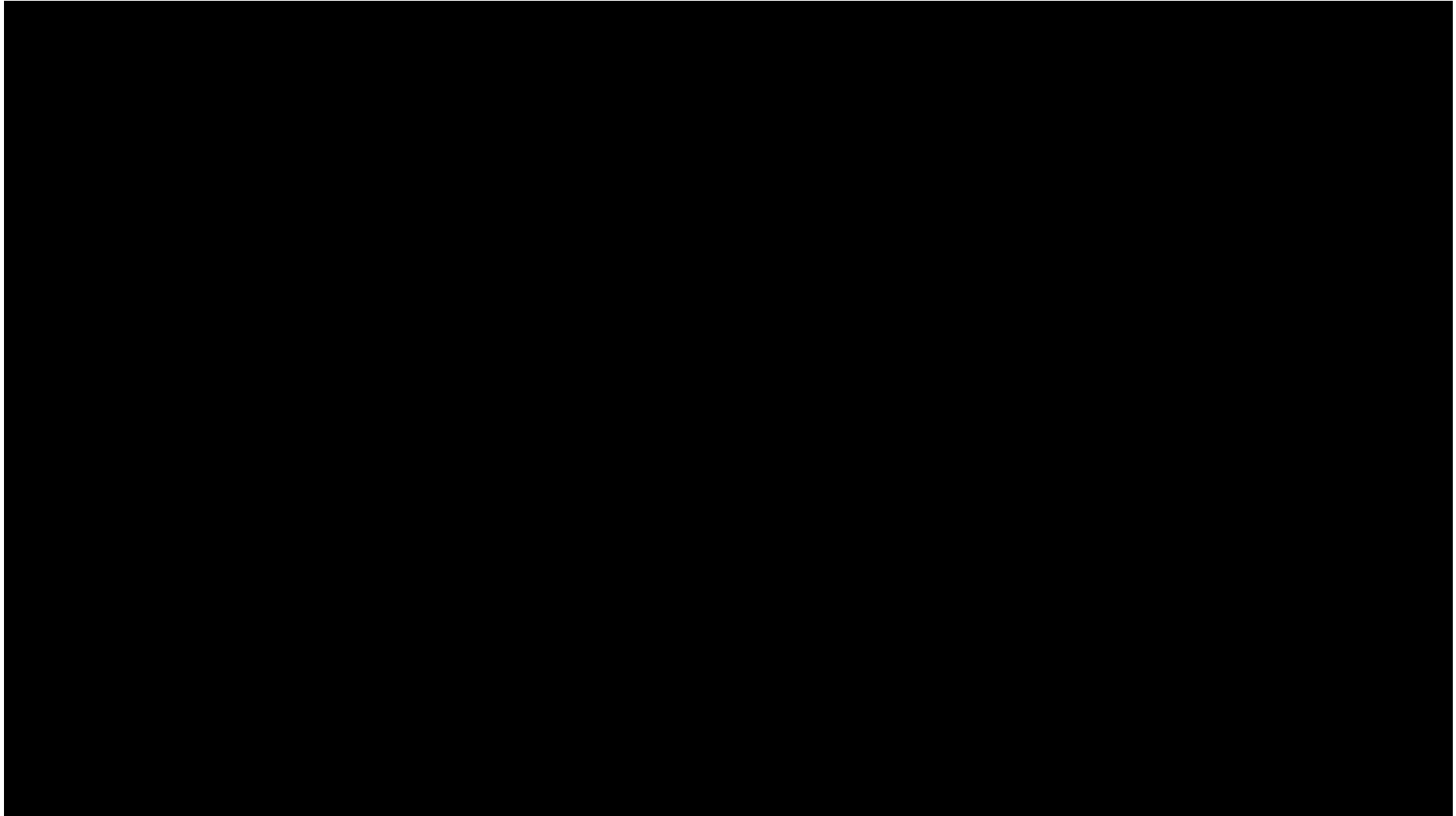


Global Recognition Convention



- Adopted by UNESCO's General Conference on 25 November 2019.
- First UN treaty on higher education with a global scope.
- Builds on and complements the five regional recognition conventions:
 - 1997 Lisbon Convention (Europe and North America)
 - 2011 Tokyo Convention (Asia Pacific)
 - 2014 Addis Convention (Africa)
 - 2019 Buenos Aires Convention (Latin America and Caribbean)
 - 2022 Arab States Convention (adopted on 2 February 2022 in Paris)
- Promotes and supports interregional mobility of students and qualification holders.

Why a Global Convention?



Global Convention Timeline



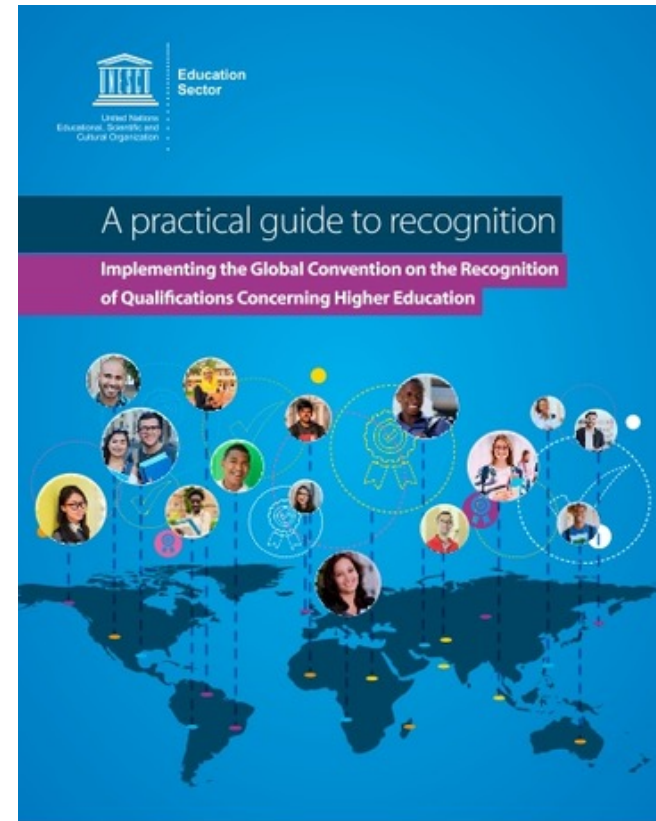
Main principles and obligations

Extends the regional recognition conventions' core principles of **fair, transparent and non-discriminatory recognition** to the **global level**, including provisions on:

- **Recognition as the main rule**, unless the recognition authority/university can prove **substantial differences** between a foreign qualification and corresponding national qualifications;
- The **right to appeal** recognition decisions;
- Recognition of **partial studies** and of **refugees' qualifications**.

Also some **new elements**, such as:

- Recognition of **prior learning** and **non-traditional learning**;
- **Partial recognition** if substantial differences are identified;



Education
2030



unesco

Education
2030

Ratification status November 2022: 18 States Parties

1	Norway	Group I	8 June 2020
2	Nicaragua	Group III	1 October 2020
3	Estonia	Group II	15 June 2021
4	France	Group I	1 July 2021
5	Romania	Group II	26 July 2021
6	Tunisia	Group Vb	19 November 2021
7	Croatia	Group II	1 December 2021
8	Holy See		17 December 2021
9	Lithuania	Group II	17 January 2022
10	Armenia	Group II	8 February 2022
11	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Group I	30 March 2022
12	Côte d'Ivoire	Group Va	6 April 2022
13	Cuba	Group III	7 April 2022
14	Palestine	Group Vb	14 April 2022
15	Sweden	Group I	20 May 2022
16	Slovakia	Group II	29 June 2022
17	Japan	Group IV	13 September 2022
18	Cabo Verde	Group Va	5 October 2022

The Convention will enter into force 3 months after the deposit of the 20th instrument of ratification.

- 1 country will deposit in December 2022.
- 20 countries are at an advanced stage.
- 30 countries have initiated procedures or expressed an interest to ratify.

Entry into force and convening of intergovernmental conference

➔ **Entry into force expected in first half of 2023:**

➔ Provisions and obligations will become **binding** for States Parties;

➔ UNESCO will convene the **1st Intergovernmental Conference of States Parties**, which will promote the application of the Convention and oversee its implementation.

- Consists of all States Parties as full, voting members.
- Observers include the heads of the regional recognition conventions.
- Meets in ordinary sessions every two years, where it adopts:
- Work Programme concerning activities between sessions;
- Operational guidelines, recommendations, declarations, models of good practices, or any relevant subsidiary text at the global or interregional level.

Relationship with the regional recognition conventions

For recognition decisions:

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

For implementation structures:

- Heads of the regional recognition convention committees participates in the ICOSP;
- The committees of the regional conventions will be consulted on important decisions;
- The existing networks of national information centres (ENIC-NARIC, APNNIC, AFNIC) are identified as key implementation structures of the Global Convention.

Thank you

Learn more: www.unesco.org/education

 @UNESCO

Andreas Snildal, Secretary to the Global Convention

glocohed@unesco.org

<https://www.unesco.org/en/education/higher-education/global-convention>



unesco

United Nations
Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization