

ASIA-EUROPE MEETING (ASEM)

Expert Group 2 on Recognition and Balanced Mobility

2nd meeting: Discussion on Terms of Reference and planning of the future activities

12 April 2023

Online

Minutes

Participants

#	Delegation	Name	Surname
1	ASEM-DUO Secretariat	Keuk-Je	Sung
2	Bulgaria	Ivana	Radonova
3	Cambodia	Nith	Bunlay
4	Cyprus	Yannis	Kasoulides
5	European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)	Magalie	Soenen
6	Erasmus Student Network (ESN)	Olivia	Parczyk
7	Estonia	Janne	Pukk
8	European Students' Union (ESU)	Ana	Gvritshvili
9	European University Association (EUA)	Maria	Kelo
10	Germany	Stefanie	Engert
11	Germany	Tim	Maschuw
12	Greece	Ioannis	Katsanevakis
13	Hungary	Laura	Sinóros-Szabó
14	International Association of Universities (IAU)	Giorgio	Marinoni
15	India	Kuldeep	Dagar
16	India (Co-chair)	Pankaj	Mittal
17	Indonesia	Yulita	Priyoningsih
18	Ireland	Ian	McKenna
19	Italy (Co-chair)	Marina	Malgina
20	Italy	Serena	Spitalieri



21	Lao PDR	Viengdavong	Luangsithideth
22	Latvia	Baiba	Ramina
23	Lithuania	Kristina	Sutkutė
24	Malaysia	Khairul Salleh	Mohamed Sahari
25	Malta	Lawrence	Azzopardi
26	Mongolia	Oyunaa	Purevdorj
27	SEAMEO RIHED	Christelle	Agustin
28	ASEM Education Secretariat	Vera	Lucke
29	ASEM Education Secretariat	Sibeles	Chiari

Austria, Brunei Darussalam, Korea, Romania, Thailand, UNESCO Bangkok have not participated in this meeting.

Welcome by the Co-chairs and adoption of the agenda

The Co-chair Dr. Pankaj Mittal welcomed all members of the Expert Group on Recognition and Balanced Mobility (EG2). She recounted the members' decision agreed during the first meeting of this EG2 to appoint two Co-chairs, namely Ms. Marina Malgina (Italy) and Ms. Pankaj Mittal (India), guaranteeing a charring balance between Europe and Asia. She also recounted that the first draft of the Terms of Reference was circulated among members for comments to be discussed and approved during the second meeting.

Attachment: ASEM_EG2_2nd_Meeting_Agenda_12042023

Discussion on Terms of Reference for Expert Group 2 on Recognition and Balanced Mobility

The Terms of Reference were briefly presented by Dr. Pankaj Mittal. Firstly, the total number of the participants, namely 22 countries and 7 stakeholders, was reported and the working period of the Expert Group on Recognition and Balanced Mobility (EG2), from its establishment in February 2023 to the 10th ASEMME 2026 (if confirmed by the Ministers at ASEMME 9) was outlined. Secondly, the 2017 Seoul Declaration of ASEMME6 and the two Chair's Conclusions of ASEMME7 in 2019 and ASEMME8 in 2021 were recalled being considered as pivotal documents for the policy background of this EG2. Then, the attention was drawn to the purposes and intended outcomes of the ToR, remarking the importance of reaching consensus on the purposes should the group want to achieve the five deliverables listed in this document. Dr. Pankaj Mittal stated that having the final version of the ToR finalized by the next Senior Officials' Meeting (22-23 May 2023) would be highly desirable. Consequently, she invited the attendees to share their

ideas and suggestions on the ToR and the activities of the EG2. Broadly speaking, the whole group approved the ToR after small comments were made. For instance, the importance of achieving not only more connected, but also more transparent higher education systems among Asia and Europe was underlined (bullet 2 of the ToR purposes); It was also stated the need to specify the field and direction that tools and good practices will take (bullet 4 of the ToR intended outcome); finally the information already gathered linked to the ASEM compendium was recalled and the importance of updating such data was underlined (bullet 3 of the ToR purposes and bullet 2 of the ToR intended outcome).

Attachment: ASEM_EG2_Draft_ToR_12042023

Discussion on Action Plan for Expert Group 2 on Recognition and Balanced Mobility

The discussion on Action Plan was opened by the Co-chair Ms. Marina Malgina. It was stated that before thinking about the methodology and the structure of the Action Plan, it was essential to agree on the topics which the EG2 intends to focus on.

Brain storming on topics:

- Updating the Compendium
- Peer learning activities (at European level there are many useful examples that should be considered)
- Good practices VS bad practices: sharing the difficulties encountered due to the lack of quality assurance and recognition.
- Synergies between the Lisbon Recognition Convention, Tokyo Convention and Global Convention.
- TNE and validation process.
- Validation of informal and non-formal learning and their impact on recognition practices.
- Best practices regarding the qualifications awarded through online/blended learning and quality assurance mechanism.
- The interpretation of the existing substantial differences between Asia and Europe in the context of balanced mobility

Considerable attention was paid to the issue of the Compendium, considered a very good inventory tool to keep all the relevant information collected and make it accessible to all stakeholders. In order to use it and improve it, updates are needed and those countries that are not included yet need to be integrated. It was proposed to keep the existing links of the country's profile of the Compendium to national database and quality assurance to guarantee access to right and reliable information, as well as, linking it to other existing country profiles (for examples, [ENIC-NARIC](#), [EHEA](#), [APNNIC](#)). The improvement of moving the last update time from the end to the beginning of each webpage profile was suggested. As for the people to contact to ask for updated data, official contact points of

the ASEM Education Ministries should be reached out. Moreover, the group outlined the value of establishing a protocol that would set rules regarding many aspects, ranging from the methodology of new countries joining the Compendium and its sustainability, to the quality assurance of the reported data and the historical overview of the education systems. All these aspects need to be discussed in detail by members of the EG2 to ensure the functionality of the Compendium. The whole group was informed on the fact that, in the previous years, the Secretariat was in charge of asking countries for updates yearly and members of the working group were responsible for checking the quality of the data (Asians checked the European data and vice-versa, to look at it from the other region's perspective).

Afterwards, the Co-chairs Dr. Pankaj Mittal and Ms. Marina Malgina remarked the importance to elaborate a framework for the Compendium and asked members to send them written comments on what should be changed and updated of their countries' profiles by 17 May 2023. In this way, a first general overview of the tool will be available by the next first Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM1).

Moreover, the importance to be aligned with the ASEM Education Strategy 2030 and its Action Plan was reminded. In this regard, it was suggested creating a yearly EG2 Action Plan to make it more concrete and to be adapted better to the activities already envisioned in the overall Action Plan of the ASEM Education Process. To achieve the EG2 goals', it was also proposed to establish smaller groups in the future. Finally, the relevance of the interconnectivity with the other three Expert Groups of the ASEM Education Process, namely the Expert Group on SDGs and Education, the Expert Group on LLL and TVET, the Expert Group on Digitalization was highlighted.

Next steps:

- The Co-chairs will send a call for proposals to the group via e-mail asking for inputs on activities and topics.
- All members are asked to analyze the information of their country's profile listed in the [ASEM compendium](#) and send the Co-chairs first feedback **by 17 May 2023** to be able to update it and improve the overall structure.
- The Co-chairs will organize an online meeting on 31 May 2023 to start planning activities until the 9th ASEM Ministerial Conference.

Planning of the next EG2 meeting

The Expert Group on Recognition and Balanced Mobility will gather after the Senior Officials' Meeting 1 takes place. The Co-chairs proposed the date **31 May 2023 at 9:00am** Central European Summer Time (**CEST**) for the third meeting, and most of the group accepted it. However, the final date will be decided by the Co-chairs in the next weeks



according to the availability of the majority of the group. In fact, the co-Chairs asked those who were not available on 31 May 2023 to send them other dates.

Any other business

The outcomes of the Expert Group will feed into the Stocktaking Report to be presented at the 9th ASEMME Ministerial Meeting (ASEMME9) by the ASEM Education Secretariat. The possibility of gathering in person will be considered for future meetings, as the greater efficiency and the added value of the face-to-face communication and interaction was emphasized.

Closing remarks

The Co-chairs thanked all the participants and closed the meeting.

Minutes drafted by the ASEM Education Secretariat