Establishment of NIC for Qualification Recognition in Korea

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1. Current recognition system
2. Necessity of a NIC
3. Establishment of a NIC
4. Issues and challenges
Current recognition system

1. Verification and Recognition of degrees/diplomas

- **Verification of doctoral degrees**
  - National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF)

- **Recognition of degrees/diplomas**
  - Individual HEIs: Individual institutions have a primary responsibility for verification of foreign degrees/diplomas

  - Korean Council for University Education (KCUE)
    - Stopped degree verification, yet focus on degree recognition and quality assurance
Current recognition system

2. Government approach: Registration and Verification

- History of Verification of doctoral degrees

1971: Registration of foreign degrees was required by law for the first time (Enforcement Decree of the Higher Education Act)
1991: National Research Foundation was appointed as the institute for the registration. Started to verify foreign doctoral degrees.
1994: Korean Council for University Education (KCUE) published a directory of worldwide universities
2007: Recognition of foreign degrees was started by KCUE, but ended on Jan. 1, 2011.
2009: Establishment of Integrated Information System on Foreign Doctoral Degrees
Current recognition system

2. Government approach

- **NRF: Registration of foreign doctoral degrees**
  - 1991: Started to verify foreign doctoral degrees
  - Target countries (2014): USA, Canada, UK, Island, Australia, New Zealand, Netherlands, Germany, Taiwan, Sweden, South Africa

- **Procedures**
Current recognition system

3. Individual Higher Education Institutions

- **Overview**
  - Individual institutions have responsibility to verify/recognize foreign degrees
  - Applicants need to provide related information
  - The MOE provides guidelines for verification of foreign degrees

- **Procedures**
  - Vary by institution

- **Ways of verifying degrees** (through domestic organizations)
  - KCUE, NRF
Current recognition system

* KCUE: Verification of foreign degrees

- **Overview**
  - 2007: Started to verify foreign degrees
  - 2010: Verification services only focused on English-speaking countries
  - 2011, Jan. 1: Stopped the verification services

- **Procedures**
  - Request to a target institution
  - Verification of institution (Accreditation)
  - Issue an Official document
  - Report of the results to the original institution
Mobility and QR in Korea
Necessity of a NIC

1. Internationalization and mobility of students/professionals

The number of foreign students (Degree programs)
Necessity of a NIC

1. Internationalization and mobility of professionals

The number of foreign faculty

- Total
- 4-year
- 2-year
Necessity of a NIC

3. Demands from HEIs
- Individual institutions operate their own recognition system
- Necessity of recognition service for foreign students

❖ Survey of 118 Colleges and Universities

Verification of Foreign degrees

- No verification
- A Report from NRF
- Foreign Institutions
- Embassy
- Private com.
- Others

Survey of 118 Colleges and Universities
Necessity of a NIC

- **Dramatic increase of foreign students**
  - Internationalization and mobility of students/professionals

- **Need for an integrated recognition system**
  - From doctoral degree verification services to general recognition services
  - International pressure on the recognition of qualifications
  - UNESCO Convention

- **Demands from HEIs**
  - Individual institutions operate their own recognition system
  - Necessity of recognition service for foreign students
Implementation of the 2011 Revised Convention
Participation in regional dialogues

Host and Join the meetings in UNESCO

- 2011 10th Regional Committee in Seoul, 2012
- Annual participation in expert meeting and regional committees (2012, Nanjing, 2013 Bangkok, 2014 Colombo)
- Support to Global Convention on QR in HE (2013~2015)
Establishment of a NIC

Studies on the degree recognition in Korea

- Problems and Improvement Plans for the Certificate System for University Degrees (Kim et al., 2007)
- Policy Alternatives for the Verification of Overseas Degrees (Oh et al., 2011)
- Establishment of International Networking for the National Information Centers (Ko et al., 2012)
- A Study on the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications and National Information Centers in Europe and Asian-Pacific Region (Ko et al., 2014)
- A Study on the Development of Country Education Profile on the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications in Selected Countries (Ko, 2014)
Plan for establishment of a NIC

Organizational Structure (Proposed plan)

- **Plan 1: An organization under MOE**
  - A common structure of NICs.

- **Plan 2: An independent organization**
  - A new independent organization

- **Plan 3: A sub-division under KCUE**
  - Currently KCUE has two offices and five centers
  - A NIC becomes one of the centers
    * Should be recognized by MOE
Establishment of a NIC

Main tasks (Proposed)

- **Information of HE system**

- **Establishment of recognition system for foreign degrees**
  - Recognition of domestic and foreign degrees (NQF)
  - Including verification of foreign doctoral degrees

- **Comparative analysis of international education and degree system**
  - Collect & disseminate information on overseas HE systems
  - Provide information on the comparability of foreign HE programs

- **Communication among NICs**
  - Cooperation b/w NICs and other networks
Establishment of a NIC

Governance (Proposed plan)

- **Short-term plan**
- Each team should have 2-3 staff members
- Estimated budget: Vary
Establishment of a NIC

Governance (Proposed plan)

- Long-term plan
- Each team should have 2-4 staff members
- Estimated budget: vary (Self-supported institution)
Issues and Challenges

1. For a NIC in Korea
   ❖ **Acquiring authority**
     - Need to acquire legal and public authority as a national center on the recognition of degrees and qualifications

   ❖ **Establishing and amending laws/regulations**
     - Related laws and regulations should be established or amended (e.g., Higher Education Act, Article of Cooperation of KCUE)

   ❖ **Securing initial financial support**
     - Assure financial support to establish a NIC and develop related database systems
Issues and Challenges

2. For Networking among NICs

A. Using existing network
   - **APARNET, UNESCO Portal** → Need to update regularly.

B. Strengthening human network
   - **Establish human network**
   - **Establish working groups**

C. Connecting with other organizations & networks (NICs)
   - Australian NIC, ENIC/NARIC, etc.
Issues and Challenges

3. For bilateral agreements of QR

- Incorporate the overarching principles of the 2011 Revised Convention into bilateral agreements

  - Korea-Russia agreement/arrangement (Nov 2015)
  - Korea-France agreement (Nov 2015)

- Political decision: Coverage of an agreement, Signing authority, Comparison and recognition of domestic and foreign degrees, and Lack of engagement of stakeholders, etc.
Thank You
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