Concept Note

Regional Workshop on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications in Asia and the Pacific

21-23 October 2015
Bangkok, Thailand

Background

Over the past two decades, significant changes have reshaped the landscape of higher education in Asia and the Pacific, including the rapid growth of both private and public providers, expansion of cross-border higher education, the development of national qualifications frameworks (NQF), and assessment tools to measure learning outcomes. These trends present new challenges to ensure that qualifications in higher education are both relevant and recognized in a fair and transparent way.

During the 13th Session of the Regional Committee on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications in Asia and the Pacific, held in August 2014 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Member States called on UNESCO to provide technical guidance on ratification procedures and, more broadly, to help raise awareness about the strategic importance of the Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education, which was adopted in Tokyo, Japan on 26 November 2011.

Building on the request for capacity building at national level, UNESCO will host a three-day interactive workshop from 21 to 23 October 2015 in Bangkok,
Thailand for Member States and key stakeholders to review ratification procedures and assess the role of the 2011 Revised Convention in the context of their national higher education systems. To do so, basic principles related to the recognition of qualifications, partial studies, and qualifications held by refugees and other displaced persons will be explored as part of a broader debate about implementation mechanisms, strategies and procedures for ratifying the 2011 Revised Convention.

**Objectives of the workshop**

- Conduct a pre-workshop survey to document needs and readiness levels of participating Member States related to the 1983 Convention and 2011 Revised Convention.
- Raise awareness and build national-level capacity to ratify and implement regional conventions. In partnership with workshop participants, UNESCO will develop a tailored advocacy brief that explains the strategic importance, support mechanisms (e.g. National Information Centres), and technical procedures for ratifying the 2011 Revised Convention based on national contexts.
- Develop a regional status report and implementation plan for Asia-Pacific in preparation for the 14th Regional Committee meeting in 2016.

**Organisers**

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

**Participants and resource specialists**

An estimated 40 officials nominated by their respective governments, resource persons, and UNESCO staff are expected to join the capacity building workshop.

**Venue**

Pullman Bangkok Grande Sukhumvit, Bangkok, Thailand
Tentative programme (21-23 October 2015)

Day 1: Arrival
- Welcome and overview (9:00 start time)
- Regional trends, opportunities, and the status of recognition procedures in Asia-Pacific
- Working group session one: What is the strategic importance of the 2011 Revised Convention? Participants and resource specialists will join one of three working groups based on shared interests and common issues.
- Lunch
- Working group reports on challenges and opportunities
- Welcome dinner and reception

Day 2: Building readiness - Exploring mutual gains in support of ratification
- Evaluating technical procedures and obstacles for ratifying the 2011 Revised Convention (UNESCO Paris).
- Working group session two: Evaluating national-level procedures and technical needs to advance ratification
- Lunch
- Working group session three: Visioning and action planning for ratifying the 2011 Revised Convention based on local needs
- Reviewing and adapting the draft advocacy brief for strengthening recognition mechanisms (i.e. supplemental material for the Toolkit for the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications)
- Evening free

Day 3: Moving forward - Adapting a regional convention to local needs
- Final group meeting: Adapting the advocacy brief and ratification process to the local context
- Working group presentations of action plans
- Lunch
- Synthesis report: Reviewing action items, timelines and technical assistance needed
- Evening free
For further information, please contact:

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