Establishing a NIC & Developing Network: Korean Perspective

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1. Current recognition system in Korea:

- **Verification of degrees/diplomas:**
  - The National Research Foundation (NRF)
  - The Korean Council for University Education (KCUE)*
  - Individual HEIs: Individual institutions have a primary responsibility for verification of foreign degrees/diplomas
1.1 NRF: Registration of foreign doctoral degrees

- **Overview**
  - 1991: Started to verify foreign doctoral degrees
  - 2009: Establishment of Integrated Information System on Foreign Doctoral Degrees

- **Procedures**
  - Report on degree information
  - Submit related documents
  - Receive information and documents
  - Provide Registration report card
1.2 KCUE: Verification of foreign degrees

- **Overview**
  - 2007: Started to verify foreign degrees
  - 2010: Verification services only focusing on English-speaking countries
  - 2011: Stopped the verification services

- **Procedures**
  1. Request to a target institution
  2. Verification of institution (Accreditation)
  3. Issue an Official document
  4. Report of the results to the target institution
1.3 Individual Higher Education Institutions

- **Overview**
  - Individual institutions have responsibility to verify foreign degrees
  - Applicants need to provide related information
  - The MEST provides guideline for verification of foreign degrees

- **Procedures**
  - Vary by institutions

- **Ways of verifying degrees** (through domestic organizations)
  - KCUE (22), KRF (13)
## Current System

### Ways of verifying degrees (through foreign organizations)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO IAU (International Association of Universities)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appostille</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embassies</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean HEIs directly contact foreign HEIs (by phone, email, fax, mail, etc.)</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chea.org</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student clearinghouse.org</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confucius Institute in Seoul, China Higher-education Student Information</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China Academic Degree &amp; Graduate Education Development Center</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>auradata.com</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Necessity of a NIC

- **Dramatic increase of foreign students**
  - Increased demand on centralized recognition services

- **Lack of systemic recognition system**
  - Individual institutions operate their own recognition system
  - Need integrated recognition system

- **Demands from HEIs**
  - Necessity of recognition service for foreign students: over 90%
  - Recognition agency should be National/public organization: over 90%

- **New directions for recognition services**
  - From doctoral degree verification to general recognition services
Necessity of a NIC

1. The number of foreign students (degree programs)

- Number of foreign students:
  - 2005: 15,577
  - 2006: 22,624
  - 2007: 32,056
  - 2008: 40,585
  - 2009: 50,591
  - 2010: 60,000
  - 2011: 63,653
Necessity of a NIC

2. Number of Korean Students abroad

- Korea is one of top 3 sending countries to USA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Sub-total</th>
<th>Language Internship</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>52,253</td>
<td>10,119</td>
<td>62,372</td>
<td>66,448</td>
<td>128,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>50,362</td>
<td>25,463</td>
<td>75,825</td>
<td>13,344</td>
<td>89,169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>9,327</td>
<td>4,660</td>
<td>13,987</td>
<td>18,612</td>
<td>32,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>112,273</strong></td>
<td><strong>40,579</strong></td>
<td><strong>152,852</strong></td>
<td><strong>99,035</strong></td>
<td><strong>251,887</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Possibilities

- **Long history of verification services**  
  - Since 1971

- **Supported by law and government**  
  - Higher Education Act clearly indicates the establishment of an information system for degrees of foreign schools

- **Strong capacity of individual HEIs**  
  - Individual HEIs have established their own system to recognize foreign degrees
### 1. Long history of verification services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Registration of foreign degrees was required by law for the first time (Enforcement Decree of the Higher Education Act)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>National Research Foundation was appointed as the institute for the registration. Started to verify foreign doctoral degrees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>The Korean Council for University Education published a directory of worldwide universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Verification of foreign degrees was started by the Korean Council for University Education, but ended in Jan. 1, 2011.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Supported by law and government

- **Higher Education Act**
  - Article 27 (Report of Doctor’s Degree Obtained in Foreign Country) (1) The person who obtains a doctor’s degree from a foreign country shall report it to the Minister of Education, Science and Technology pursuant to the Presidential Decrees.  

  (2) The Minister of Education, Science and Technology shall establish an information system for the degrees of foreign schools including the status of doctor’s degree of foreign schools and accreditation of the local government on the degree.  
  <Newly established on Mar. 28, 2008>
Possibilities

2. Supported by Law and government

- A new policy on verification of foreign degrees
  - Provide guidelines and manual
- Accreditation of institutions on the recruitment & management of foreign students

3. Strong capacity of individual HEIs

- Institutional Practices
  - Government(NRF/KCUE) provides information and HEIs follow the guidelines
  - Many HEIs have specific regulations and guidelines
    (examples: Hongik University, Sungkyunkwan University)
Establishment of a NIC

1. Organizational Structure (plan)
   - Plan 1: An organization under MEST
     - A common structure of NICs.
   - Plan 2: An independent organization under KCUE
     - Currently KCUE has two offices and five centers
     - A NIC becomes one of the centers
       * Should be recognized by MEST
2. Main tasks

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

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

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

3. Governance

- Director
- Advisory Committee
- Recognition Management Team
- Technical Support Team

4. Remaining issues

- **Acquiring authority**
  - Need to acquire legal and public authority as a national center
- **Initial financial support**
  - Need enough financial support to establish a NIC and develop a related database system
Networking of a NIC

1. Using existing network
   - APARNET (Asia Pacific Academic Recognition Network)
   - UNESCO Portal to Recognized Higher Education Institutions
     → Need to update regularly.

2. Strengthening human network
   - Establish human network
     - Off-line meetings: have regular meetings with regional convention
       have additional meeting within sub-regions
   - Establish working groups (TWG, SIGs)
3. Exploring Information Technology

- **Sharing information through IT**
  - Activate list-serve
  - Develop a common database/share a common server

- **Provide online training**
  - Provide opportunities for professional development of existing staff
  - Cultivate experts on recognition of degrees/qualifications

4. Connect to other organizations & networks
- APEC, ENIC/NARIC, etc.
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 (ex, Higher Education Act, Article of Cooperation of KUCE)

- **Secure initial financial support**
  - Need enough financial support to establish a NIC and develop related database systems
Issues and Challenges

2. For Networking among NICs

- Active involvement of member countries
- Share financial burden for networking
- Provide technical supports