UNESCO Portal to Recognized Higher Education Institutions:

A Tool for Transparency

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Background

UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education
Liberalization of educational services became one of the issues in the GATS negotiations. In order to maintain quality of education and to protect students from low-quality provision, this issue should be discussed globally by specialists at appropriate international organizations. → First at OECD (Initiatives by Australia, Norway, Japan) and then at UNESCO.
International Research Project on Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Cross-Border Higher Education

→ Necessity to prepare a comprehensive database of educational systems and a list of authorized higher education institutions of different countries by an international organization such as UNESCO so that students, employers, evaluators, educational organizations and etc. can obtain reliable information.
Proposal to produce “Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education”

2003 Nov. OECD Norway forum
Drafting group organized
2004 April, October
2005 January
Expert meetings for helping drafting group
2005 October
Draft adopted at OECD Council

2005 December
Draft adopted at UNESCO General Conference

Why do we need the guidelines?

• Diversification and expansion of provision of cross-border higher education

• Increase of necessity to recognize higher education qualifications earned in other countries as a result of increase of mobility of researchers as well as students

• Spreading of degree mills and accreditation mills

• Need to make clear distinction between educational services and general services
Guidelines

Proposals to 6 stakeholders
governments, higher education
institutions/providers, student bodies,
quality assurance and accreditation
bodies, academic recognition bodies,
professional bodies
Scope of Guidelines

• Establish the quality assurance framework of cross-border higher education by cooperation of sending and receiving countries

• Establish the fair and transparent system of recognition of higher education and professional qualifications

• Provide accurate, reliable and easily accessible information on the quality of cross-border higher education

• Networking of the stakeholders and strengthening of their cooperation and liaison both at national and international level
Final product – UNESCO Portal to Recognized Higher Education Institutions

→ The Portal has been launched so that anyone can make an access to reliable and up-to-date information on the status of higher education institutions and quality assurance system throughout the world by linking it to different countries. The Portal is expected to serve for consumer protection.
Join the UNESCO Portal to Recognized Higher Education Institutions

The Portal could be a useful tool for the implementation of the Convention. More Member States are encouraged to become part of it.

Member State Coverage

- Argentina
- Armenia
- Australia
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Canada
- Chile
- China
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Cyprus
- Estonia
- Ireland
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Kuwait
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Malaysia
- Mexico
- Namibia
- New Zealand
- Nigeria
- Norway
- Pakistan
- Paraguay
- Saudi Arabia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Thailand
- Trinidad and Tobago
- United Kingdom
- United States of America
- Uruguay
Countries in the process of finalizing their Country Pages

- Austria
- Denmark
- Egypt
- Finland
- France
- Guatemala
- Guinea-Bissau
- Guyana
- Iceland
- India
- Iran
- Iraq
- Mauritius
- Morocco
- Netherlands
- Republic of Korea
- South Africa
- Sri Lanka
- Suriname
- Switzerland
- Sweden
- Syrian Arab Republic
- Uganda
- Uzbekistan
- Zambia
Joining the Portal

2 main documents:

- A letter confirming the interest of the Member State in participating in the UNESCO Portal Project
- The return of the signed 'Designation of a National Focal Point' form to UNESCO – Section for Higher Education
Thank you for your attention