

## A practical guide to recognition

Implementing the Global Convention on the Recognition  
of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education

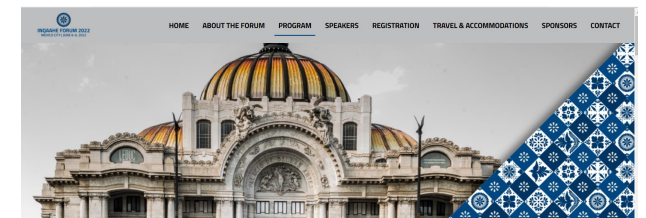


# The Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education A Brief Overview

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# Summary

- Context: (i) trends in academic mobility and internationalization, (ii) increase and diversification of HE institutions and programs.
- Background (i) regional conventions, (ii) preparation of the Global Convention, (iii) adoption of the Global Convention.
- First steps: (i) dissemination and awareness, (ii) progress in terms of ratification, (iii) ministerial meeting (November 2021), (iv) high-level session in the frame of the WHEC2022 (May 2022).
- What's coming? (next steps, challenges)
- Resources/references on the Global Convention.

‘Over the past two decades, enrolments have doubled to reach 235 million students, while international student mobility has tripled to 6 million since 2000\*.

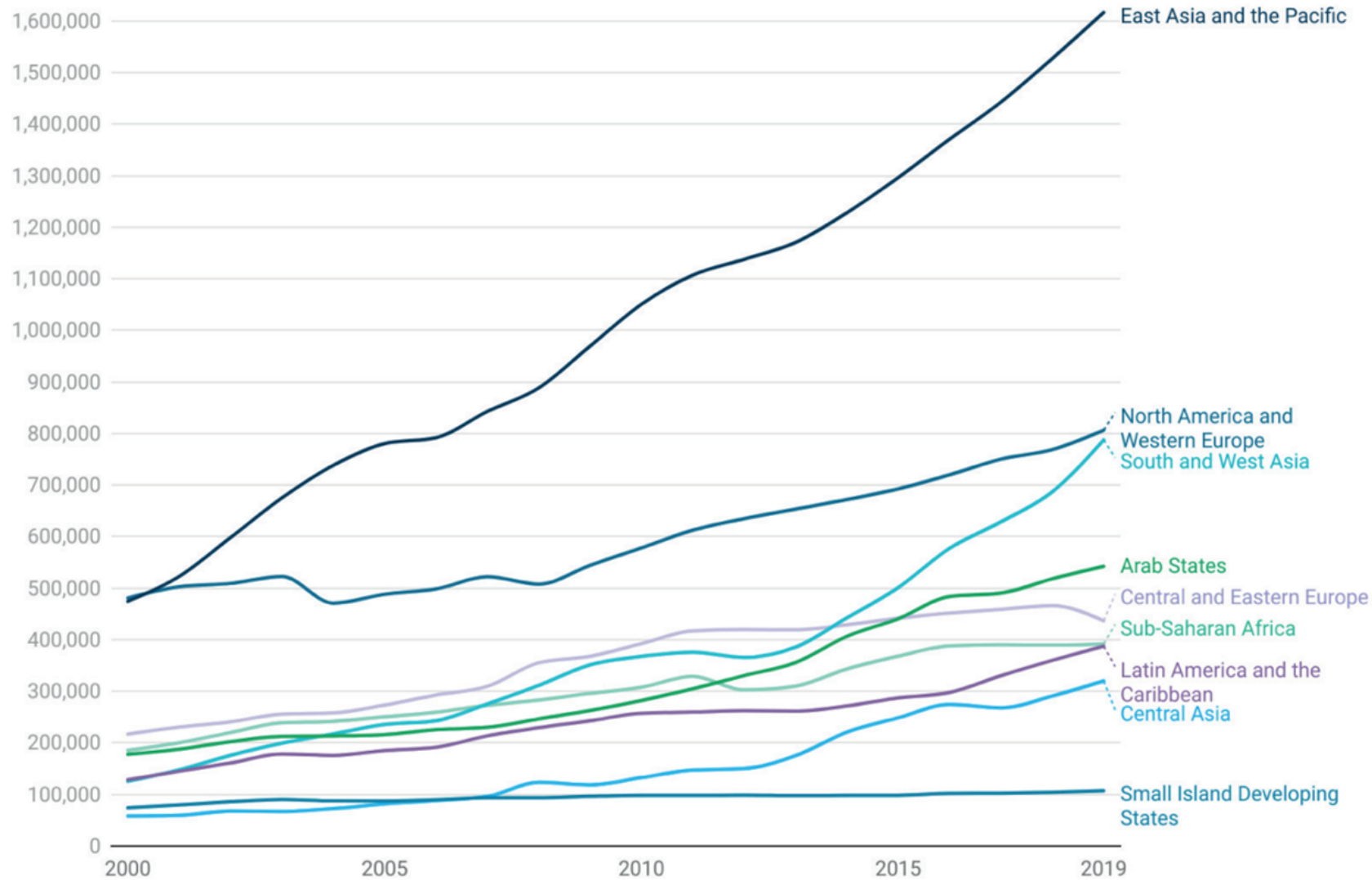
These numbers are expected to double in the next decade, placing recognition and mobility at the top of education policy agendas.’

<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/strong-appeal-ratify-global-convention-unesco-world-higher-education-conference>

‘The number and diversity of higher education institutions and programs have exploded in the last few years... it requires a deep attention to quality assurance, a pillar of the global convention ’ ([Stefania Giannini, 2022](#))

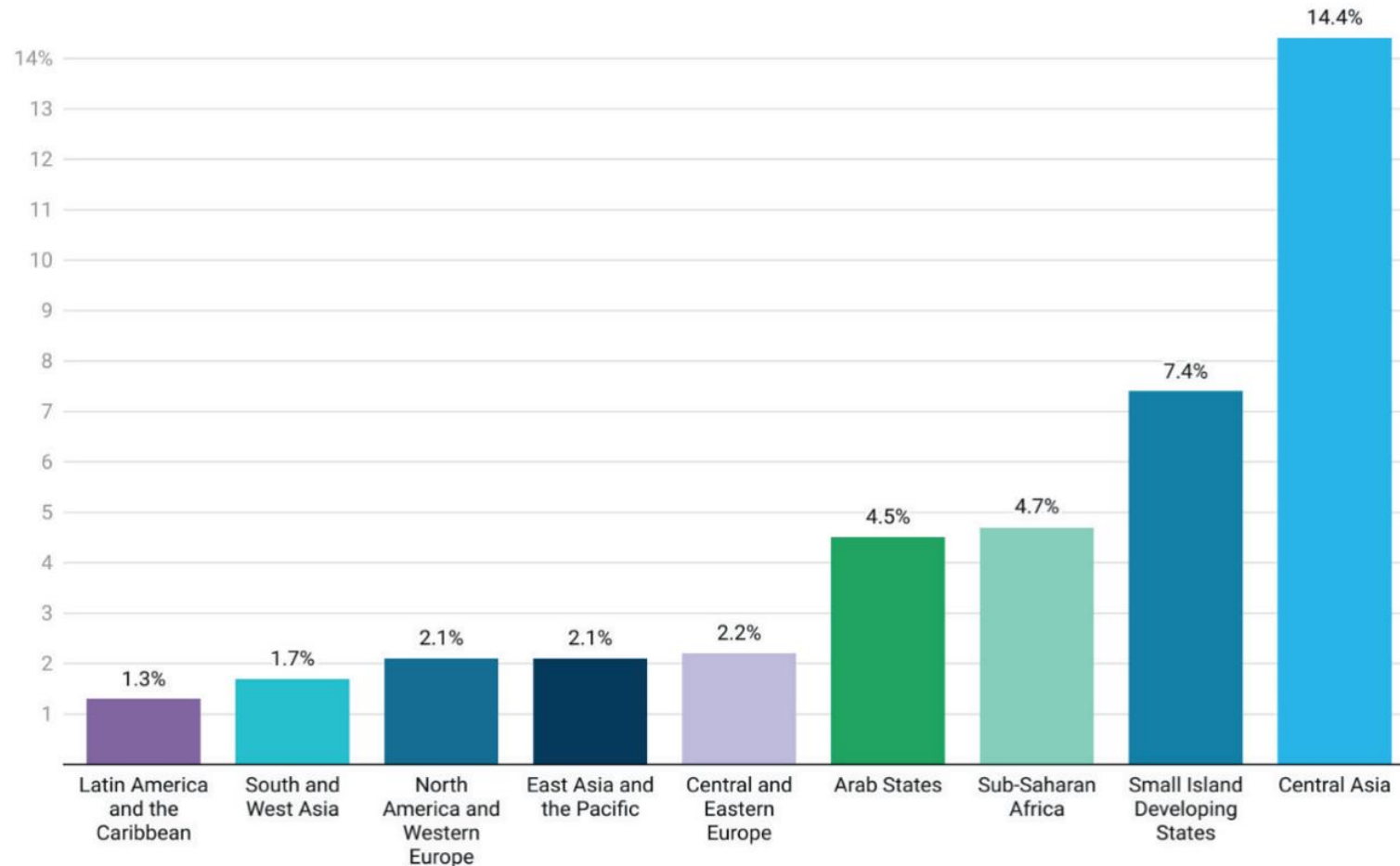


# Global growth in student mobility 2000-2019



**Source.** UNESCO-IESALC 2022. Data available to download at <https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/BX7PL/1/>

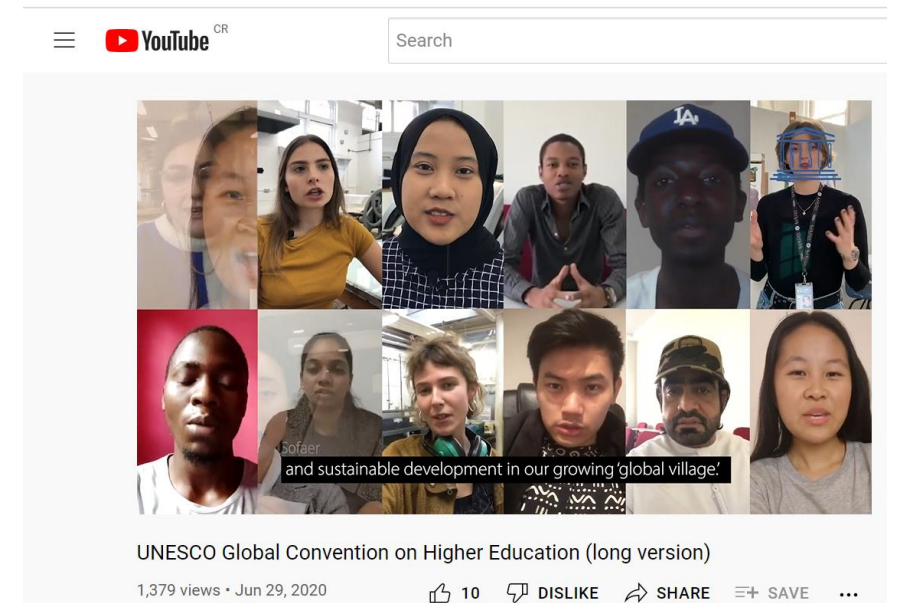
# Percentage of students who are internationally mobile by region



Source [UNESCO-IESALC](https://unesco-iesalc.org/) 2022. Data available to download at <https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/eCSJN/2/>

# Background

- Eight years of preparation (research and consultation) led by UNESCO
- Adopted unanimously by 193 State Members on 25 November 2019
- First UN higher education treaty with a global scope
- Relevant to international cooperation and knowledge sharing
- Regulatory framework for assessment and recognition between countries



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0VpEWWK4YuvU&t=17s>

# The regional conventions

Region (Year)	Legal instrument	Point of Contact
LAC (2019)	Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean	UNESCO Santiago
Africa (2014)	Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States	UNESCO Dakar
Asia and the Pacific (2011)	Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education	UNESCO Bangkok
Arab States (1978)	Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in the Arab States	UNESCO Beirut
Mediterranean Region (1976)	Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in the Arab and European States Bordering on the Mediterranean	Mediterranean Recognition Information Centres (MERIC) Network
Europe and North America (1997)	Lisbon Recognition Convention	ENIC-NARIC Networks

[https://www.cicic.ca/1408/unesco\\_regional\\_conventions\\_on\\_the\\_recognition\\_of\\_qualifications.canada](https://www.cicic.ca/1408/unesco_regional_conventions_on_the_recognition_of_qualifications.canada)

The **Global Convention** is designed to facilitate academic mobility and promote the right of individuals to have their higher qualifications evaluated [and recognized] through a **fair, transparent and non-discriminatory** manner between regions.

<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/strong-appeal-ratify-global-convention-unesco-world-higher-education-conference>



# Global Convention Milestones



2019

Adoption of [the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education](#) by the 40<sup>th</sup> session of the UNESCO General Conference (25 November)

2020

[Practical Guide](#) to Recognition – Implementing the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education (November)

2021

Pre-recorded international Ministerial meeting: [The Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education: Two years in](#) (80 minutes)

2022

On 18 May 2022, UNESCO held a [high-level session](#) (Ministers and high-level delegates of the State Parties) on the [Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education](#) at the [World Higher Education Conference 2022](#)



‘By joining the **Global Convention**, countries commit to raising the quality of higher education at home and worldwide, strengthening international cooperation and helping make academic mobility and the recognition of qualifications a reality for millions’ (May 2022)

Stefania Giannini  
UNESCO ADG for Education

<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/strong-appeal-ratify-global-convention-unesco-world-higher-education-conference>

# What's coming?

'The Convention shall enter into force three months after the date of deposit, with the Director-General of UNESCO, of the **20th instrument** of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession' (GC Article XVIII').

As of May 2022, it has 15 States Parties and requires 5 more to enter into force

# Implementation structures (GC, Art. XII)

- National implementation structures
- Networks of national implementation structures
- National, regional and global organizations for accreditation, quality assurance, qualification frameworks, and recognition of qualifications
- The Intergovernmental Conference of the States Parties
- Regional recognition convention committees

# Quality assurance and continuous improvement in higher education

‘Quality assurance mechanisms can be important levers for HE change. For that to be the case, they should help in making visible the areas where change is particularly urgent; for example:

- (i) Embrace a paradigm shift according to which all types of learning complement and supplement each other
- (ii) Normalize and recognize flexible learning pathways supported by relevant and credible structures (meaningful and practicable workloads) that are also required for alternative provisions
- (iii) Diversify curricular development focusing on learning gains and not being restricted to disciplinary skills but reinforce the deep meaning of an educational experience and the development of transferable skills
- (iv) Work with faculty members to enable them to be more focused on student’s learning than on teaching and make them able to connect both academic concerns with real-life problems
- (v) Encourage institutional management that sustains regular, meaningful and significant connections with stakeholders and uphold the public interest agenda
- (vi) Develop the regulatory frameworks that facilitate the integration and articulation among the different ways HE is provided
- (vii) Integrate relevant content and practices for teaching and research and connect them with systematically with social responsibility’

# Flexible learning pathways, recognition, mobility, and internationalization

‘The evolving landscape of HE is leading to a greater diversity of academic programs and the need to provide flexible learning pathways through recognition of all types of learning.

Increased international student mobility has led to the UNESCO regional recognition conventions as well as the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications.

Countries should recognize the importance of their ratification and implementation of these conventions, creating tools to support recognition, mobility, and cooperation.

The [Global Conventions](#) complements the regional conventions, supporting recognition and cooperation between the world’s regions.

The European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (EQRP) and, in other regions, the UNESCO Qualifications Passport (UQP), will facilitate [recognition for refugees and vulnerable migrants](#).

High-quality virtual student mobility and cross-border provision will be integral to new and more environmentally sustainable forms of internationalization, recognizing that the future will be a hybrid mix of both physical and virtual mobility’.

# Resources

## The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials ([CICIC](#))

### May 2022

Pre-recorded international meeting - 3rd World Higher Education Conference (WHEC2022) [Special Session: Global Convention High Level Session](#) (95 minutes)

### November 2021

Pre-recorded international Ministerial meeting: [The Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education: Two years in](#) (80 minutes) and an article : [Member States unite to advance academic recognition, mobility and inter-university cooperation](#)

Pre-recorded international webinar: [Global and regional higher education conventions – Higher education conversation serie](#) (80 minutes)

### Other international agreements

[https://www.cicic.ca/1408/unesco\\_regional\\_conventions\\_on\\_the\\_recognition\\_of\\_qualifications.canada](https://www.cicic.ca/1408/unesco_regional_conventions_on_the_recognition_of_qualifications.canada)

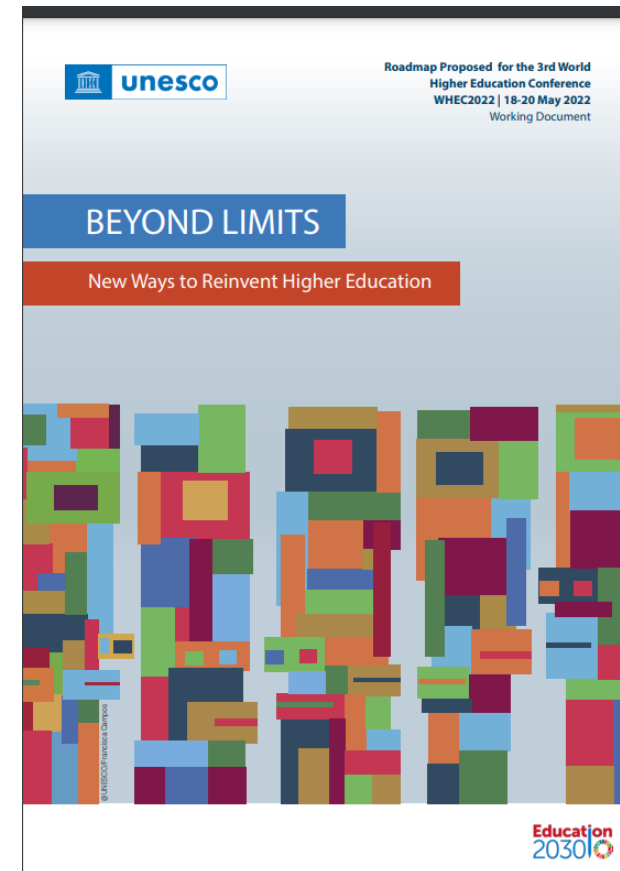
# Updates and paths in global higher education

## World Higher Education Conference (WHEC2022)

UNESCO (May 2022). Higher Education Global Data Report



UNESCO (May 2022) Beyond Limits. New Ways to Reinvent Higher Education. A Roadmap proposed for the WHEC2022





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