

COUNCIL**Council****REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OECD
RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY
PROVISION IN CROSS-BORDER HIGHER EDUCATION****(Note by the Secretary-General)****JT03580241**

1. This document presents, in its Annex, a Report by the Education Policy Committee (hereafter, the “EDPC”) on the implementation of the OECD Recommendation concerning Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education [[OECD/LEGAL/0340](#)] (hereafter, the “Recommendation”), including on the implementation of its substantive provisions, its dissemination and its continued relevance. On 20 January 2026, the EDPC approved, by written procedure, the Report set out in Annex and its transmission to Council to be noted and declassified [[EDU/EDPC\(2025\)19/FINAL](#)]. Once declassified, the Report will be made available on the [online Compendium of OECD legal instruments](#).

Background

2. Council adopted the Recommendation on 2 December 2005, on the proposal of the Education Committee (currently the Education Policy Committee) [[C\(2005\)147](#) and [C/M\(2005\)24/PROV](#), Item 313]. The Recommendation aims at providing an international framework to protect students and other stakeholders from low-quality higher education provision and disreputable providers. The Recommendation is open to adherence by OECD Members and non-Members. As of July 2025, all 38 OECD Member countries and two non-Member countries (Brazil and Kazakhstan) have adhered to the Recommendation (hereafter, “Adherents”).

3. The Recommendation itself establishes a set of five broad principles (hereafter the “policy recommendations”) by calling on Adherents to:

1. *Develop appropriate frameworks for quality provision of higher education across borders [...];*
2. *Take the appropriate steps for the implementation of this Recommendation, as set forth in greater detail in the Guidelines [...];*
3. *Assist as appropriate non-member economies to implement the Guidelines [...];*
4. *Widely disseminate the Guidelines to all relevant [...] stakeholders;*
5. *Encourage and support [named stakeholder groups] to take the appropriate actions to implement the Guidelines at international, regional and national levels.*

4. The Recommendation also sets forth in greater detail actions to be taken to implement the Guidelines on Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education (hereafter, the “Guidelines”), which are contained in the Annex to the Recommendation. The Guidelines address recommendations to relevant stakeholder groups on how to assure quality provision in cross-border higher education (hereafter, “CBHE”) and ease the recognition of qualifications across borders. The Guidelines were elaborated at the time in close collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (hereafter, “UNESCO”) and followed on from other international legal instruments developed to promote quality provision in CBHE.

Developments in the field since adoption of the Recommendation

5. Since the adoption of the Recommendation, quality assurance systems have evolved, with most Adherents having external quality assurance agencies, national information centres and academic recognition bodies that are well established and internationally networked. Particular progress has been made in the area of recognition of qualifications, with all global regions having a regional recognition convention and, in 2023, the UNESCO Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education (hereafter, “Global Convention”) came into force (UNESCO, 2019^[1]), with a growing number of State parties.

6. Since 2005, the scale and scope of CBHE have continued to grow. The number of international students in the 38 OECD Member countries increased from 2.9 million in 2013 to over 5.1 million in 2023 (OECD, 2025^[2]). Cross-border mobility, particularly of students, is observed in all Adherents, although on different scales. In terms of transnational education – in other words, the cross-border mobility of programmes or providers – all 40 Adherents and 7 accession candidate countries have at least one modality of transnational education present in their country, most commonly joint, dual or double degree programmes. Another common CBHE modality is the international branch campus, which emerged as a significant form of higher education provision, particularly in East and Southeast Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. At the same time, there has been a growth in online, blended and hybrid learning, which is changing how education can be delivered across borders.

7. When adopting the Recommendation, the Council instructed “the relevant OECD bodies” “to survey developments by appropriate stakeholders in countries regarding implementation of the Recommendation and to assess the Guidelines in light of developments in cross-border higher education, and to report back to Council as appropriate”. Since the adoption of the Recommendation, two reports on the implementation of the Recommendation have been submitted to the Council, in 2012 [[C\(2012\)8](#)] and in 2015 [[C\(2015\)18](#)].

Methodology

8. The developments in CBHE highlighted above have necessitated the update of the survey developed in 2014 and used for the 2015 Report. The new survey questionnaire (hereafter, the “Survey”) was developed by the OECD Secretariat and shared for comments with the Group of National Experts on Higher Education (hereafter, the “GNE-HE”). Based on the received feedback, the Secretariat updated the Survey and accompanying documentation to provide more clarifications about different CBHE modalities and added more questions about international mobility. The Survey focuses on activities and elements which are within the general purview of regulators and policy makers (i.e. guidelines for governments, quality assurance and accreditation bodies and academic recognition bodies). The Survey was shared with the EDPC and GNE-HE, and was fielded between September 2024 and June 2025, with a total of 27 responses received (hereafter, the “Respondents”) from 24 Adherents and 3 accession candidate countries, with sub-national responses from Belgium (the French and Flemish Communities) and the United Kingdom (England, Scotland and Wales). To assess the implementation of the Recommendation more broadly, the survey responses were complemented by desk research. The desk research was carried out throughout 2024 and 2025 and covered all 40 Adherents and the 7 accession candidate countries (hereafter, “covered countries”).

9. Accession candidate countries are covered in the Report due to the relevance of the Recommendation in their contexts. As Brazil is already an Adherent, the Report refers to other seven accession candidate countries which are not yet Adherents to the Recommendation. All seven countries have at least one CBHE modality present in their jurisdiction. The 3 responding accession candidate countries have already undergone their accession review by the EDPC and actively participate in the GNE-HE. While accession candidate countries are included in the analysis and reporting, they are not included in the assessment of the level of implementation.

10. The Report assesses the implementation of 19 specific elements (detailed in Report in Table 1) identified in the Recommendation and the Guidelines (hereafter, the “Elements”). Each element is assessed based on how many Adherents or Respondents have implemented it, breadth, and where relevant also on whether all or only some parts of the element are implemented, depth. The level of implementation is assessed based on the evidence collected using a five-point scale: no, minimal, partial, substantial or full implementation (detailed in Report in Table 2).

Process

11. The Secretariat developed a proposal to carry out a Report on the implementation of the Recommendation as part of the 2025-26 Programme of Work and Budget, which was supported by the EDPC at its April 2023 meeting [[EDU/EDPC/M\(2023\)1/REV1](#)]. In 2024, the Secretariat developed a new Survey, which was shared with the GNE-HE for comment and shared for completion with the relevant stakeholders through the [O.N.E Community](#) and direct emails. A first version of the draft Report was shared with the GNE-HE for discussion at its 9th meeting on 25-26 September 2025 and for comments by written procedure by 3 October 2025 [[EDU/EDPC/GNEHE/RD\(2025\)1](#)]. The first version of the draft Report and its annexes were also shared with Respondents to validate the interpretation of the responses and the accuracy of information added based on desk research. Based on comments received and discussion at the GNE-HE's 9th meeting, on 25-26 September 2025, the second version of the draft Report was submitted to the EDPC for approval. On 20 January 2026, the EDPC approved, by written procedure, the Report set out in Annex and its transmission to Council to be noted and declassified [[EDU/EDPC\(2025\)19/FINAL](#)]. Once declassified, the Report will be made available on the [online Compendium of OECD legal instruments](#). In addition, the OECD Secretariat envisages publication of a policy paper including excerpts and analysis of information collected in preparation for this Report.

Summary

Implementation

12. Overall, the Recommendation has been implemented to a substantial extent – a majority of Adherents implemented most of the Elements of the Recommendation. Out of 19 Elements assessed, three were assessed to be fully implemented across Adherents, eight as substantially implemented, six partially implemented and two minimally implemented (detailed in Report in Table 8). In terms of the first and second policy recommendations, most Adherents have developed comprehensive study information portals, quality assurance and regulation frameworks, and procedures for recognition of foreign qualifications. However, inclusion of CBHE modalities in quality assurance and regulation frameworks and information portals is inconsistent. In terms of the third policy recommendation, there has been minimal activity in assisting and supporting non-Adherents implement the Guidelines. In terms of the fourth and fifth policy recommendations, the Guidelines have been disseminated and implementation encouraged to the greatest extent among quality assurance and academic recognition bodies, particularly in Europe. Awareness of the Guidelines and support for implementing them is less developed among higher education institutions/providers and minimal in the case of professional bodies.

Dissemination

13. The Secretariat has engaged with stakeholders over recent years, particularly governments and quality assurance bodies, and presented the Recommendation and developments in the field since its adoption. As highlighted in the assessment of the fourth policy recommendation, dissemination efforts by Adherents are partial. The findings of the Report suggest that the Recommendation and the Guidelines are being used, although they are not widely disseminated. Among stakeholders, quality assurance bodies remain the most active in disseminating and using the Recommendation and the Guidelines. The Guidelines continue to be referenced in the literature and in adopted international standards and guidelines for quality assurance. More efforts to disseminate the Recommendation to other relevant stakeholders and non-Adherents should be explored.

Continued relevance

14. Regulatory, quality assurance and information policies have evolved since the adoption of the Recommendation, but Adherents still do not consistently include CBHE modalities in their policies. In relation to academic recognition of qualifications, the new generation of regional conventions and the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education provide more comprehensive and detailed framework than the Recommendation. The Recommendation and the Guidelines are in some places outdated in terms of the terminology used, only marginally address specific challenges emerging with online cross-border provision and make limited reference to the cross-border mobility of students and academic staff. However, the principles of the Recommendation remain widely relevant, in particular, in relation to quality assurance of transnational education, which is emerging as a growing policy priority. In the context of growing international student mobility and transnational education, their broader adoption and implementation could address many of the persistent challenges and risks associated with CBHE. More dissemination of the Recommendation and the Guidelines, support and guidance for their implementation to all the relevant stakeholders is needed. As such, no revisions are deemed necessary at this time.

15. Accordingly, the EDPC, through the GNE-HE, will continue to support Adherents in implementing the Recommendation and surveying developments in the field. It is proposed that the EDPC report back to Council on the implementation, dissemination and continued relevance of the Recommendation in ten years. The rationale for a longer reporting period is a relatively slow evolution of regulatory provisions and implementation practices across Adherents. In the intervening period, the Secretariat will work on other projects that cover cross-border higher education to develop larger evidence base and support the implementation of the Recommendation. When relevant, the Secretariat should engage and co-ordinate with UNESCO and other international and regional stakeholders. An earlier report to Council would be prepared if changes in the field warrant it.

Proposed action

16. In light of the above, the Secretary-General invites the Council to adopt the following draft conclusions:

THE COUNCIL:

- a) noted document [C\(2026\)27](#), in particular the Report set out in its Annex, and agreed to its declassification;
- b) encouraged Adherents to the Recommendation to:
 - (i) continue disseminating and implementing the Recommendation;
 - (ii) address the challenges identified in the Summary and conclusions section of the Report, in particular those highlighted in paragraphs 124-135;
- c) invited the Education Policy Committee, through the Group of National Experts on Higher Education to:
 - (i) support Adherents in addressing the main challenges set out in the Summary and conclusions section of the Report, in particular those highlighted in paragraphs 124-135;
 - (ii) report back to Council on the implementation, dissemination and continued relevance of the Recommendation in ten years or earlier, if developments in the field warrant it.

Annex. Report on the implementation of the OECD Recommendation concerning Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education

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1 Background

1. When adopting the OECD Recommendation concerning Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education [[OECD/LEGAL/0340](#)] (hereafter, the “Recommendation”), the Council instructed “the relevant OECD bodies, if and when possible in co-operation with the relevant UNESCO bodies, to survey developments by appropriate stakeholders in countries regarding implementation of the Recommendation and to assess the Guidelines in light of developments in cross-border higher education, and to report to the Council as appropriate”. Accordingly, the OECD Secretariat designed a survey (hereafter, the “Survey”) and conducted desk research to assess the implementation of the Recommendation, preparing this Report (hereafter, the “Report”) for the Education Policy Committee (hereafter, the “EDPC”).

Origin and scope of the Recommendation

2. Council adopted the Recommendation on 2 December 2005, on the proposal of the Education Committee (currently the Education Policy Committee) [[C\(2005\)147](#) and [C/M\(2005\)24/PROV](#), Item 313]. The Recommendation aims at providing an international framework to protect students and other stakeholders from low-quality higher education provision and disreputable providers.

3. The Recommendation is open to adherence by OECD Members and non-Members. As of July 2025, all 38 OECD Member countries, and two non-Member countries (Brazil and Kazakhstan) have adhered to the Recommendation (hereafter, “Adherents”). Since the last implementation report in 2015, four countries have become OECD Members (Colombia, Costa Rica, Latvia and Lithuania), and both Brazil (since May 2019) and Kazakhstan (since April 2016) have become Adherents to the Recommendation.

4. The Recommendation itself establishes a set of five broad principles (hereafter the “policy recommendations”) by calling on Adherents to:

1. *Develop appropriate frameworks for quality provision of higher education across borders, especially focusing on:*
 - a) *Providing students/learners with adequate information resources for informed decision-making to protect them from the risks of misleading guidance and information, low-quality provision including rogue providers, degree mills that offer low-quality educational experience and qualifications of limited validity and accreditation mills.*
 - b) *Making qualifications readable and transparent in order to increase their international validity and portability and to ease the work of recognition and credential evaluators. This objective should be facilitated by reliable and user-friendly information sources and needs to be combined with the commitment of institutions/providers to provide cross-border higher education of comparable quality to that offered in the home country.*

- c) *Making procedures for the recognition of qualifications more transparent, coherent, fair and reliable, and imposing as little burden as possible on mobile students and professionals.*
 - d) *d)Intensifying international co-operation among national quality assurance and accreditation agencies in order to increase their mutual understanding.*
2. *Take the appropriate steps for the implementation of this Recommendation, as set forth in greater detail in the Guidelines on Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education (hereafter the Guidelines), which are contained in the Annex to this Recommendation and form an integral part thereof. The Guidelines are not legally binding and Member countries are expected to implement the Guidelines as appropriate in their national context;*
 3. *Assist as appropriate non-member economies to implement the Guidelines and in particular, helping them to strengthen their capacities to that effect;*
 4. *Widely disseminate the Guidelines to all relevant governmental departments and agencies, to higher education institutions/providers, student bodies, quality assurance and accreditation bodies, academic recognition bodies, professional bodies, and to other relevant stakeholders;*
 5. *Encourage and support higher education institutions/providers, student bodies, quality assurance and accreditation bodies, academic recognition bodies and professional bodies to take the appropriate actions to implement the Guidelines at international, regional and national levels.*

5. The Recommendation also sets forth in greater detail actions to be taken to implement the Guidelines on Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education (hereafter, the “Guidelines”), which are contained in the Annex to the Recommendation. The Guidelines address recommendations to relevant stakeholder groups on how to assure quality provision in cross-border higher education (hereafter, “CBHE”) and ease the recognition of qualifications across borders.

6. The Recommendation recognises that actions need to be taken also by actors other than governments. It recommends Adherents to widely disseminate the Guidelines to these stakeholders and to encourage and support the implementation of the Guidelines by these stakeholders. The Guidelines are structured around recommended actions to six stakeholder groups: 1) governments, 2) higher education institutions/providers, 3) student bodies, 4) quality assurance and accreditation bodies, 5) academic recognition bodies, and 6) professional bodies. The Guidelines include 36 individual recommended actions differentiated across these stakeholders.

7. The Recommendation, the Guidelines and previous OECD work in the field recognised the emergence of new CBHE modalities and the growth of existing modalities. By 2005, the number of students moving across borders to pursue studies and academic staff teaching in different countries had been increasing for some time. Equally, higher education institutions in different countries were collaborating more often than in past to deliver joint or dual degree programmes and higher education providers were increasingly active in multiple countries, including through online and distance delivery of higher education (OECD, 2004^[3]; OECD, 2004^[4]).

8. At the time of adoption of the Recommendation in 2005, most Adherents had some form of external quality assurance in higher education (hereafter, “QA”) and systems in place for recognition of foreign qualifications. However, these systems were frequently not geared to the challenges of cross-border provision. A lack of focus on cross-border provision and of international co-ordination and collaboration across governments, quality assurance and academic recognition bodies created gaps in the regulatory

landscape. This generated a considerable risk that students would encounter disreputable cross-border providers or low-quality cross-border programmes – a much greater risk than in domestic higher education provision. At the same time, increased international student mobility increased the need to address the issue of international academic and professional recognition of qualifications. The Recommendation and the Guidelines were developed to protect students and other stakeholders through promoting greater international co-ordination and ensuring students receive adequate information, as well as to facilitate easier recognition of qualifications.

9. The Guidelines were elaborated in close collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (hereafter, “UNESCO”) and followed on from other international legal instruments developed to promote quality provision in CBHE. The Guidelines make direct reference to – and encourage the use of – the 2001 UNESCO/Council of Europe Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education, which was revised in 2007 (Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee, 2007^[5]), and the 2001 Council of Europe/UNESCO Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications, revised in 2010 (Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee, 2010^[6]). The Recommendation also builds on and references UNESCO regional conventions, such as the 1997 Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (hereafter, “Lisbon Recognition Convention”), which covers Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand (Council of Europe, 1997^[7]).

Purpose of the Report

10. Since the last Report dates to 2015 [[C\(2015\)18](#)] (hereafter, the “2015 Report”) (with survey data from 2014) and considering developments in the intervening period, it was timely to prepare a third report to the Council on the implementation, dissemination and continued relevance of the Recommendation. In the 2015 Report, the Council “instructed the relevant OECD bodies, if and when possible in co-operation with the relevant UNESCO bodies, to continue surveying developments by appropriate stakeholders in countries regarding implementation of the Recommendation [[OECD/LEGAL/0340](#)] and to assess the Guidelines in light of developments in cross-border higher education, and to report to the Council as appropriate”.

11. In its 2016 Standard-Setting Action Plan [[EDU/EDPC\(2016\)28](#)], the EDPC reviewed the continued relevance of the Recommendation and anticipated new joint work with UNESCO “to identify how further implementation could be facilitated and to examine whether new challenges require an update of the Recommendation” planned for 2016-17, but the work was delayed. In reviewing the relevance of the legal instruments under its responsibility as part of its mandate renewal process in 2023 its mandate renewal in 2023 [[EDU/EDPC/GNEHE\(2023\)2](#)], following consultations with international stakeholders involved in quality assurance in higher education, the Group of National Experts on Higher Education (hereafter, “GNE-HE”) confirmed the continuing relevance of the Recommendation]. The Secretariat developed a proposal to carry out a Report on the implementation of the Recommendation as part of the 2025-26 Programme of Work and Budget, which was supported by the EDPC at its April 2023 meeting [[EDU/EDPC/M\(2023\)1/REV1](#)].

Methodology

12. The implementation of the Recommendation has been assessed based on information collected through a survey (hereafter, the “Survey”) and desk research. The Survey was developed by the OECD Secretariat in 2024, reflecting the developments in the field since the 2015 Report, in a development process that included consultations with stakeholders and the GNE-HE.

13. The Survey was fielded between September 2024 and June 2025 by sharing it with the GNE-HE and EDPC through [O.N.E Community](#) and direct emails, asking recipients to co-ordinate the response for each Adherent and accession candidate country. The Secretariat received a total of 27 responses, representing 24 countries – 21 Adherents: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and three accession candidate countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, and Romania (hereafter, the “Respondents”). The Secretariat received two responses from Belgium¹, separately for the Flemish and French Communities and three responses for the United Kingdom, separately for England, Scotland and Wales. In the Report, where possible, responses for Belgium and the United Kingdom are reported together, with any differences between sub-national jurisdictions noted. An overview of the Survey and individual responses is provided in Appendix A. Survey responses.

14. The Survey and accompanying documentation are set out to define more clearly the different distinct modalities of CBHE. The Survey focused on assessing the elements of the Recommendation that are within the general purview of regulators and policy makers. For several survey items, the Secretariat collected publicly available information and provided suggested responses, which were then validated by the Respondents. The Survey consisted of six sections:

1. The scope of cross-border higher education in and from the jurisdiction,
2. Regulation and quality assurance of cross-border programmes and providers,
3. Systems of regulation and quality assurance in the jurisdiction,
4. International student mobility,
5. Information about higher education systems,
6. Co-operation and co-ordination

15. To assess the implementation of the Recommendation more broadly, the Survey was complemented by desk research that focused on identifying the existence of relevant bodies (QA bodies, national information centres), publicly available information (study information about programmes and institutions, process of QA and recognition of qualification), membership of relevant international networks and the presence of different cross-border higher education modalities in each country. The desk research focused on 47 countries: 38 OECD Members, the 2 non-Member Adherents and 7 accession candidate countries (hereafter, “covered countries”). A summary of the desk research is provided in Appendix B. Collected information. In the case of Belgium¹, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States some information was collected at subnational level.

16. Accession candidate countries are covered in the Report due to the relevance of the Recommendation in their contexts. As Brazil is already an Adherent, the Report refers to other seven accession candidate countries which have not yet adhered to the Recommendation. All seven countries have at least one CBHE modality present in their jurisdiction. The three responding accession candidate countries have already undergone their accession review by the EDPC and actively participate in the GNE-HE. While, accession candidate countries are included in the analysis and reporting, they are not included in the assessment of the level of implementation.

17. The Report assesses 19 specific elements identified within the Recommendation and the Guidelines (hereafter, the “Elements”). These Elements (Table 1) cover all of the Recommendation’s 5 listed policy recommendations and 25 out of 36 recommended actions for different stakeholder groups in the Guidelines. The specific elements are thematic clusters of recommended actions taking into account

¹ Education in Belgium is governed autonomously by three communities. Report primarily covers two, Flemish and French, as the German-speaking Community has a very limited scale of higher education and did not respond to the Survey.

overlaps between them. The Report does not cover implementation by student bodies and only partially cover the implementation by professional bodies and individual higher education institutions.

Table 1. Elements of the Recommendation

Policy recommendations		Elements
1. Develop a framework for the quality provision of cross-border higher education 2. Take steps to implement the Recommendation as set forth in greater detail in the Guidelines	a) Providing adequate information	Establishing national information centres
		Providing information on recognised higher education providers and study programmes
		Providing information for internationally mobile students
		Providing information on procedures, criteria and results of external quality assurance
	b) Ensuring the validity and portability of qualifications through a comprehensive quality assurance	Establishing a comprehensive system of regulation and external quality assurance for cross-border providers and programmes
		Assuring quality and regulating cross-border student mobility
		Ensuring comparable quality across borders
		Ensuring the quality of academic staff and their working conditions
	c) Easing the process of recognition of qualifications	Developing and becoming a party to international recognition conventions and agreements
		Providing information on the assessment and recognition of qualifications
		Facilitating professional recognition
	d) Intensifying international co-operation	Encouraging consultations and co-ordination among quality assurance stakeholders
Establishing, sustaining and strengthening national and international networks of stakeholders		
3. Assist non-member economies in implementing the Guidelines		
4. Widely disseminate the Guidelines to all relevant stakeholders		
5. Encourage and support stakeholders to implement the Guidelines	Quality assurance bodies	
	Academic recognition bodies	
	Higher education providers	

18. Each of the 19 elements is analysed in section 2., each part concluding with a paragraph that provides an assessment of the level of implementation, using a five-item scale (Table 2). The assessment considers two dimensions of implementation, the breadth and depth. All elements are assessed on their breadth of implementation, the extent to which the element is implemented across Adherents. Some elements need to be considered not only from the perspective of whether it is present in the country (e.g., existence of a comprehensive quality assurance system), but also the consider the depth, the extent to which all parts of the element are implemented (e.g., it covers various modalities of CBHE and has externally evaluated QA bodies).

Table 2. Scale of implementation

	No	Minimal	Partial	Substantial	Full
Breadth	None or almost none (less than 10%) of the (responding) Adherents have implemented the element	A few (10-40%) of the (responding) Adherents have implemented the element	About half (40-60%) of the (responding) Adherents have implemented the element	A majority (60-90%) of the (responding) Adherents have implemented the element	All or nearly all (more than 90%) of the (responding) Adherents have implemented the element
Depth	No parts of the element are implemented	Few parts of the element are implemented	Some parts of the element are implemented	Most parts of the element are implemented	All parts of the element are implemented

Note: Developed by the Secretariat.

Defining cross-border higher education

19. The Recommendation defines cross-border higher education as “higher education that takes place in situations where the teacher, student, programme, institution/provider or course materials cross national jurisdictional borders”. Despite extensive work around the phenomenon of higher education provided across international borders, the terminology used in international literature is diverse and inconsistently applied (Knight and McNamara, 2017^[8]; Knight, 2008^[9]). Mobility of people, primarily students, is often studied separately. Mobility of programmes and providers is frequently referred to as transnational education, offshore or borderless education, which might in different contexts have diverse definitions. This Report, in line with the Recommendation, uses the term cross-border higher education (CBHE) to refer broadly to mobility of people, programmes and providers. In line with contemporary usage, the Report uses the term transnational education (TNE) to refer to programmes and providers that operate across borders. Within these broader categories, there are distinct CBHE modalities. Informed by work that led to the development of the Recommendation and the Guidelines, recent developments and consultations, this Report works with a more precise and updated framework of CBHE modalities, as defined in Table 3.

Table 3. Framework of cross-border higher education modalities

Category	Modalities	Description
People [1]	International student credit mobility [2]	Temporary mobility during which a student from country A studies for fixed period at a provider in country B. Their home provider in country A recognises learning outcomes achieved (credits) in country B towards their final qualification.
	International student degree mobility	A student moves across borders from country A to pursue a complete study programme at a provider in country B.
	International academic stays	An academic staff member working at a provider in country A moves to work temporarily in country B, either at a provider there or for fieldwork in country B.
	International academic relocation	An academic staff member moves from country A to work permanently in a provider in country B.
Programmes	Franchise programme	An arrangement whereby a provider from country A authorises (franchises) a provider in country B to deliver a programme (developed by the provider in country A) in country B. The provider from country A assures quality. The qualification is awarded by the provider in country A.
	Validation/ articulation arrangement	An arrangement whereby a provider develops and delivers a programme in country B, but through agreement, a provider from country A recognises obtained credits (articulation) or the whole qualification (validation) towards a qualification in country A. Systematic student credit mobility is a form of articulation arrangement. Pathway programmes are another model, where students start their studies or enrol in dedicated preparatory programmes in country B, but can transfer to a provider in country A in a second step, with at least some of their acquired credits recognised towards the final qualification in country A.
	Joint or double/multiple degree programme	An arrangement where a provider from country A collaborates with a provider from country B (or multiple providers in different countries) to offer and deliver a programme for which a student can receive a single joint qualification (for joint degree programmes) or two or more qualifications (one from every participating provider in case of double/multiple degree programmes). Arrangements include collaboration on curriculum development and delivery, and in many instances also require student mobility.
	[Recognised] distance programme	An arrangement where a provider from country A delivers a programme to students in country B through online, hybrid or blended study modes. This may include some in-person support for students through study or support centres in country B. Students are recognised as having the status of a student in their country of residence, and they have a clear pathway towards recognition of their qualification.
Providers	International branch campus	A provider in country A establishes a satellite campus in country B to deliver more than one programme to students in country B. Campuses can be operated in collaboration with local academic infrastructure providers, who usually oversee the physical campus and non-academic functions. The provider from country A oversees all academic matters. The qualification awarded is by the provider in country A.
	Joint (or binational) institution	A stand-alone higher education institution (or a department or faculty) in country B is established and operated by or in partnership with provider(s) from country A (HEI, network of HEIs, commercial companies). The partnership can include partners (HEIs, state actors, commercial companies) from

	country B. The institution primarily offers qualifications from country B. The partnerships can encompass involvement in institutional governance, curriculum consultation and development, student and staff mobility, various modalities of cross-border programmes, research and other collaborations.
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Notes: [1] Some jurisdictions refer to internationally mobile international students/academics based on the country of their prior residence, while some focus on citizenship and refer to foreign students/academics.

[2] Distance (virtual, online) credit mobility is understood as an articulation arrangement rather than student mobility. Developed by the Secretariat based on Knight (2007^[10]), *Cross-border Tertiary Education: An Introduction*, in *Cross-border Tertiary Education: A Way towards Capacity Development*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264038493-3-en> and Knight and McNamara (2017^[8]), *Transnational education: a classification framework and data collection guidelines*, https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/tne_classification_framework-final.pdf (accessed on 22 February 2024).

20. Jurisdictions use different terms and definitions of the different CBHE modalities. A key distinction in this Report is made based on who, between the sending and hosting jurisdiction, has the primary responsibility for different activities or tasks (Table 4).

Table 4. Distribution of primary responsibility in transnational education provision

Modality	Relation to home (sending) provider	Developing curriculum	Delivering curriculum	Awarding credits / qualifications	External quality assurance
Franchise programme	Curricular export, quality oversight	Sending provider	Hosting provider	Sending provider	Sending jurisdiction
Validation/ articulation arrangement [1]	Agreements, recognition of education	Hosting provider	Hosting provider	Sending provider	Sending jurisdiction
Joint, double or multiple degree programme	Programme collaboration	Either / both providers	Either / both providers	Either / both providers	Either / both jurisdictions
[Recognised] distance programme	Own programme delivered elsewhere	Sending provider	Sending provider (or local partner)	Sending provider	Sending jurisdiction
International branch campus	Satellite campus, academic responsibility	Home provider	Campus in the hosting jurisdiction	Sending jurisdiction	Sending jurisdiction (sometimes hosting)
Joint (or binational) institution	Co-established, participation in governance, and intense co-operation	Either / both providers	Provider in the hosting jurisdiction	Hosting jurisdiction	Hosting jurisdiction (sometimes sending)

Notes: [1] In the case of validation and articulation arrangements, students follow courses offered at providers in country B and students who meet certain requirements can have their credits recognised for a qualification from a provider in country A. The responsibility for awarding the qualification or credits, and thus external quality assurance, is then transferred to relevant bodies and providers in country A. For other students, the qualification-awarding provider is still in country B, as is responsibility for external quality assurance.

Developed by the Secretariat based on Knight and McNamara (2017^[8]), *Transnational education: a classification framework and data collection guidelines*, https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/tne_classification_framework-final.pdf (accessed on 22 February 2024).

Developments in the field since the adoption of the Recommendation

21. This Section focuses on developments regarding study mobility, TNE and international standards and guidelines related to the topics covered by the Recommendation since its adoption in 2005, with closer focus on the developments since the 2015 Report.

International credit and degree mobility has been increasing

22. Desk research confirmed that all Adherents have some policies and initiatives to promote and support the mobility of people across borders, particularly in attracting international students. This increased interest in attracting international students is also seen in the emergence of information and outreach portals. In 43 out of 40 Adherents and 7 accession candidate countries, the government provides or supports the provision of an information portal for international student considering studying in the country. This is further discussed in paragraphs 47-51. Other types of mobility are also supported. Out of 27 Respondents, 26 promote incoming credit mobility, 25 incoming degree mobility and outgoing credit mobility and 21 outward degree mobility (individual responses are provided in Appendix Table A.5).

23. Since the adoption of the Recommendation, the number of internationally mobile students has steadily increased, both in terms of credit and degree mobility. The number of inbound internationally mobile students in the 38 OECD Member countries increased from 2.1 million in 2005 (UNESCO, 2025_[11]) to over 5.1 million in 2023 (OECD, 2025_[2]). In recent years, most OECD Member countries have seen growth in the number of international students, with only four countries seeing a decline in international students between 2018 and 2023, in part due to travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in migration policies (OECD, 2025_[2]). An emerging development is the introduction in recent years of restrictions by several major international-student destinations to limit incoming student mobility.

24. Similar growth can also be seen in terms of credit mobility. The Erasmus+ Programme, the largest operation in OECD Member countries to promote study exchanges in higher education, involving primarily students studying in the European Union, saw a rapid increase from 144 037 students supported in the academic year 2004/05 (European Commission, 2006_[12]) to about 391 981 learners in higher education participating in 2024 (European Commission, 2025_[13]). In the United States, the Institute of International Education counted 280 716 students studying abroad for academic credit in 2022/23, up from 205 983 in 2004/05 (Institute of International Education, 2024_[14]).

Transnational education has become more widespread but enrolment remains limited

25. The evidence about the scale of TNE – mobility of programmes and providers in the terms of the Recommendation – is less precise and often limited to specific countries or specific modalities. Desk research confirms that all Adherents and accession candidate countries have at least one TNE modality in their territory. The most common modalities are joint, double/multiple degree programmes, present in all Adherents and accession candidate countries. Additionally, at least 39 countries (33 Adherents) either host an international branch campus (hereafter IBC) or are home to a higher education provider that oversees an IBC in another country. More than half of the Respondents also report the presence of validation or articulation arrangements (15 Respondents are either hosting or sending), and recognised distance programmes (13 Respondents), and joint or binational institutions (12 Respondents). Franchise programmes are the least common TNE modality, with only seven Respondents hosting or sending. Individual responses are in Appendix Table A.1.

Table 5. Number of countries hosting or sending transnational education modality

Modality (N = sample)	Hosting	Sending
Franchise programme (N=24)	6	4
Validation/ articulation arrangement (N=24)	13	11
Joint or double/multiple degree programme (N=47)	47	
[Recognised] distance programme (N=24)	12	10
International branch campus (N=47)	31	29
Joint (or binational) institution (N=24)	10	10

Note: Compiled by the Secretariat based on responses from the Survey (N=24), Belgium and the United Kingdom counted if at least one subnational response confirmed presence of the given modality. Information on joint, double or multiple degree programmes for non-respondents was obtained through desk research of institutional websites. Information on international branch campuses is based on Survey responses and data from the Cross-Border Education Research Team (2025_[15]).

26. While some TNE modalities are common across Respondents, most of them described the scale of such provision, in terms of the number of programmes or providers and enrolment levels, as relatively low. Exceptions include Respondents that have significantly promoted TNE as a form of educational export. For example, in the United Kingdom, about 621 065 students in 2023/24 were either registered overseas at a UK higher education provider or studying for a UK qualification offshore, about 17.5% of the total student population, enrolled in UK provider or studying for UK qualification (Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2025_[16]). Another Respondent very active in TNE is Australia, which had about 115 265 enrolments on TNE provision offered by Australian providers outside Australia in 2023 (about 7.2% of the total student population), up from 93 117 in 2014 (6.8%) (Department of Education, 2025_[17]).

27. Over the past two decades, joint, dual and multiple degree programmes have matured from experimental schemes into more structured and regulated educational offerings within OECD Member countries. Initial growth through the 2000s focused on dual degree programmes and, only later, adoption of joint degree programmes, which require greater co-ordination of quality assurance and regulation across borders and more extensive collaboration between the providers (Knight, 2011_[18]; American Council on Education, 2014_[19]). Particularly in Europe, the growth in collaborative provision has been promoted by the European Union's Erasmus Mundus action, started in 2004, which, in its various iterations, has supported the establishment and operation of joint master's programmes. In the first programme period (2004-2008), the scheme supported 103 master's programmes; this increased to 140 in the 2009-2013 period and 251 programmes in the 2014-2020 period. In the latest period, the initiative has so far, already supported 91 programmes between 2021 and 2023 (Ferencz and Kupriyanova, 2024_[20]). The push for more joint educational offerings is also at the core of the European Universities Initiative (European Commission, 2025_[21]) and the recent drive to establish a joint European degree (European Commission, 2024_[22]).

28. A global institutional survey by the International Association of Universities conducted in 2023 (hereafter, "IAU Survey") found that the majority of higher education institutions have collaborative provision (63%) in the form of either dual/double degrees (56%) or joint degrees (49%). Collaborative provision is the most widespread in North America (88% of responding institutions) and in Europe (72%). Among those offering either type of collaborative programme, the majority of IAU Survey Respondents suggested that in the past five years there has been an increase in the offer of dual/double degree (54%) and joint degree programmes (50%) (Marinoni and Pina Cardona, 2024_[23]). The findings for Europe are broadly in line with another institutional survey carried out in Europe, confirming that more than half (56%) of institutions have joint degrees and reported growth in their numbers (Gaebel, Zhang and Stoeber, 2024_[24]). However, in the case of the United States, a more detailed survey by the American Council on Education found that in 2022, only 7% of institutions were operating joint degree programmes with partners abroad and 17% operated international dual/double degree programmes (American Council on Education, 2022_[25]). Nevertheless, at least one joint or double/multiple degree programme is present in all the Adherents and accession candidate countries, albeit to varying extents. Even in countries with a higher number of such programmes, enrolment in the programmes tends to be relatively small.

29. Since 2005, there has also been a significant growth in online, virtual, and distance study programmes, driven by improved broadband infrastructure and broader adoption of digital technologies. This is underlined by the rise of Massive Open Online Courses, which increased global access to online education and introduced a more modular approach to education (OECD, 2021_[26]). The COVID-19 pandemic catalysed an unprecedented shift to online learning, and temporary emergency remote teaching evolved into more structured online programmes, with many institutions formalising their online offer

post-2020 (OECD, 2023^[27]). Many of these programmes are widely available across borders but are rarely formally recognised. Respondents acknowledged that international providers are recruiting students from their country for online courses, and domestic providers in their countries might be providing online education that attracts international students, but these cross-border enrolments in online education are not widely measured or accounted for in domestic regulation.

30. The IUA Survey has also identified the presence and growth of other TNE modalities. About 17% of responding HEIs reported operating a joint university (joint/binational institution), with about 57% of them seeing an increase in the last five years. The second most common modality was articulation programmes that were globally present at about 17% of responding HEIs, of which 52% reported an increase over the last five years. Franchise programmes were reported by 12% and IBCs 9%, with nearly half of them seeing these modalities as increasingly important (49%, respectively 45%) (Marinoni and Pina Cardona, 2024^[23]).

31. The Cross-Border Education Research Team has identified that at least 137 IBCs existed around the world in 2005. A decade later, that number had increased to 249 in 2015 (Garrett et al., 2016^[28]). Latest mapping from the same research team found 383 IBCs operating across the globe in 2025 (Cross-Border Education Research Team, 2025^[15]). The database has not only captured the establishment of new IBCs but also a relatively high number of closures over the years, as IBCs operate in a relatively volatile regulatory and financial environment. Nevertheless, there still seems to be eagerness on the part of many countries, mostly outside the OECD, to promote the establishment of IBCs (Wilkins, 2024^[29]).

A range of relevant international standards and guidelines have been adopted

32. Since the adoption of the Recommendation, other international standards and policy toolkits have emerged that support stakeholders to implement the underlying principles of the Recommendation and further its objectives to assure the quality of the CBHE provision and ease the recognition of foreign qualifications.

33. In terms of QA, there are a few notable initiatives that have assisted relevant stakeholders in implementing the Recommendation. In 2006, UNESCO worked with the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (hereafter APQN) to develop the UNESCO-APQN Toolkit: Regulating the quality of cross-border education (UNESCO Bangkok, 2006^[30]). Between 2013 and 2016, a number of QA bodies in Europe, the Asia-Pacific and the Gulf regions worked together on a project – Quality Assurance of Cross-border Higher Education – developing a policy toolkit and common principles for QA in CBHE (Al-Sindi et al., 2016^[31]).

34. Networks of QA bodies have also worked to develop common standards and guidelines to harmonise across countries. The 2022 International Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education, developed by the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (hereafter INQAAHE), have a dedicated module of standards for CBHE (INQAAHE, 2022^[32]). In Europe – within the European Higher Education Area (hereafter EHEA) – particular efforts have been made with the adoption by the relevant ministers of the 2005 European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, updated in 2015 (EHEA, 2015^[33]), which harmonised approaches to QA, including in relation to CBHE. A second step was the development of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, adopted in 2015 (EHEA, 2015^[34]), which is, however, yet to be widely implemented (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education, 2022^[35]). Recent communiqués from EHEA Ministerial meetings, Rome (2020^[36]) and Tirana (2024^[37]) have made explicit commitments related to QA of transnational education.

35. Since 2005, other global regions have joined European and North American countries, alongside Australia and New Zealand, that adopted the 1997 Lisbon Recognition Convention, in developing new regional recognition conventions in other parts of the globe:

- The Asia-Pacific Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (hereafter Tokyo Convention) entered into force in 2018,
- The revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States (hereafter Addis Convention) entered into force in 2019,
- The Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (hereafter Buenos Aires Convention) entered into force in 2022,
- The Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in the Arab States was adopted in 2022 but has not yet entered into force.

36. Some progress has been made also on the professional recognition, with the European Union 2005 Professional Qualifications Directive, amended in 2013. The Directive established a system of automatic professional recognition of qualifications in countries of the European Single Market (EU Members, as well as Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein) for seven professions: nurses, midwives, doctors, dentists, pharmacists, architects and veterinary surgeons (European Union, 2013^[38]).

37. In 2023, the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education (hereafter, the “Global Convention”) came into force, connecting these regional conventions, promoting global collaboration and ensuring broader recognition of qualifications worldwide (UNESCO, 2019^[11]). During the Second session of the Intergovernmental Conference of States Parties to the Global Convention on Higher Education, in June 2025, a research paper was discussed on quality assurance, including that of transnational education. The conference supported the plans to develop a new subsidiary text on this topic.

38. Another related international standard is the recent Council of Europe Recommendation on countering education fraud (Council of Europe, 2022^[39]), which recognises the risk of fraud in CBHE and the need to work across countries to address it.

39. To facilitate the development of more transnational collaboration and education in the European Union, the Council of the European Union has adopted the Recommendation on a European quality assurance and recognition system in higher education, which focuses on strengthening and harmonising QA systems, as well as promoting automatic recognition of qualifications (Council of the European Union, 2025^[40]).

40. The Guidelines have several references and encourage Adherents and relevant stakeholders to apply the principles and use the UNESCO/Council of Europe Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education adopted in 2001. The text was twice revised since, in 2007 and most recently in 2025, as a subsidiary text to the Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention (UNESCO / Council of Europe, 2025^[41]).

2 Implementation

41. The implementation assessment of the first and second policy recommendations is combined as these encompass, respectively, the development and implementation of policies in four key areas. The other three policy recommendations are assessed separately. Altogether, the 19 Elements, as identified in the Recommendation and Guidelines (see Table 1), are assessed.

Policy recommendations 1 and 2. Develop appropriate frameworks for quality provision of higher education across borders and take the appropriate steps to implement the Guidelines

42. The implementation of the first and second policy recommendations is structured around four core topics as outlined in the first policy recommendation: a) providing adequate information, b) ensuring validity and portability of qualifications through comprehensive quality assurance, c) easing recognition of qualifications, and d) intensifying international co-operation. The second policy recommendation suggests that Adherents “take the appropriate steps for the implementation of this Recommendation, as set forth in greater detail in the Guidelines.”

A. Providing adequate information

43. The Recommendation identifies information provision as a key feature to promote transparency in CBHE to limit uninformed decision-making by students about their studies and to give providers a predictable environment in which to operate. This Section examines whether Adherents have established national information centres and are providing information on recognised higher education providers and study programmes, information for internationally mobile students and information on the procedures, criteria and results of QA processes.

Establishing national information centres

44. The Guidelines recommend that Adherents consider becoming a party and contribute to the development and/or updating of the appropriate UNESCO regional conventions on recognition of qualifications and, in line with these conventions, establish a national information centre (hereafter, “NIC”) [Guidelines, paragraph 14.e]. The NICs are intended to be “entities that provide access to relevant, accurate and up-to-date information about its higher-education system” (UNESCO, 2019^[1]). NICs have a role in providing information to both students, the public and potential higher education providers.

45. Survey responses and desk research confirmed that all but three Adherents have established a NIC, and 3 out of the 7 accession candidate countries also have a NIC. The lack of NICs among covered countries is especially visible in Latin America, but the recent establishment of a Network of National Information Centres of Latin America and the Caribbean – in 2024 – and ongoing work by UNESCO in the region are promising developments that should support greater implementation. A list of identified NICs is provided in Appendix Table B.1.

46. **Level of implementation: full.** Overall, nearly all Adherents (37 out of 40) have a NIC, showing a high degree of compliance with the Guidelines.

Providing information on recognised higher education providers and study programmes

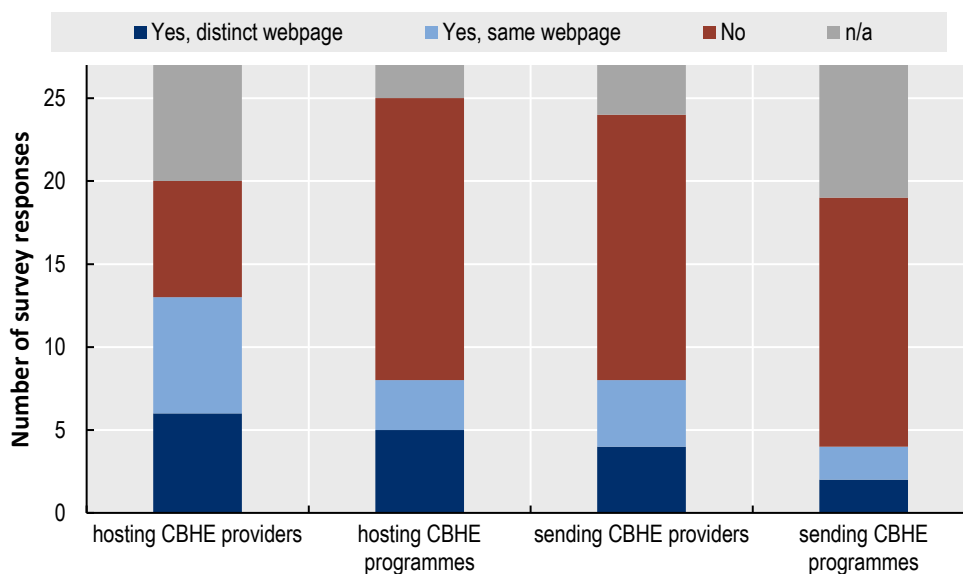
47. The Guidelines recommend that governments contribute to providing accessible, up-to-date, accurate and comprehensive information on recognised higher education institutions/providers [14.g)]. The Guidelines also recommend that higher education institutions/providers provide complete descriptions of the programmes and qualifications they offer [16.h)]. The implementation assessment of this Element focuses on whether information about recognised higher education institutions/providers and their study programmes is provided nationally. Furthermore, the assessment also considers whether the information about providers and programmes includes information on CBHE modalities.

48. Based on the responses to the Survey and desk research, all covered countries have a publicly available list of recognised domestic higher education institutions/providers and the study programmes they offer (an overview of websites with all recognised providers and programmes is provided in Appendix Table B.1).

49. In the case of CBHE provision, the information available is incomplete (Figure 1). Thirteen of the 20 Respondents that host CBHE providers (e.g. IBCs or bi-national/joint institutions) provide consolidated information on them. Six Respondents provide a website that separately lists hosted CBHE providers from other providers and seven Respondents include CBHE providers on a list with domestic provider. Seven Respondents do not have publicly available information about CBHE providers operating in their jurisdiction. For hosted CBHE programmes (e.g. franchise, validation/articulation or distance programmes), only eight Respondents (out of 25 which host CBHE programmes) provide public information on them. Five Respondents have a distinct list of CBHE programmes and three include CBHE programmes alongside other study programmes offered in the country. CBHE provision operating abroad is only included in the lists in eight instances for providers (out of 24) and only in four instances for programmes (out of 19). The individual responses are in Appendix Table B.1.

Figure 1. Number of Respondents providing or supporting provision of information on cross-border higher education

Information on CBHE provided on same or distinct webpage from domestic provision



Note: Respondents were asked to provide a link that includes information about all recognised CBHE providers or programmes, hosted in the country or operated abroad by a provider registered in their jurisdiction. The Secretariat reviewed the provided links, assessing whether CBHE providers and programmes are reported separately (shown in the chart as “distinct webpage”) or alongside domestic providers or programmes (shown in the chart as “same webpage”). Respondents that do not host or send any CBHE providers or programmes are reported as not applicable in the given category “n/a”.

50. Further desk research found that among 48 reviewed portals with information on study programmes – covering 45 covered countries and 2 separate study portals for the 2 Belgian communities – only 9 portals had a filter that made it possible to identify joint, double or multiple degree programmes (see details in Appendix Table B.2). While more portals included this type of study programme, in their overall listings, the programmes were not distinguishable from domestically delivered programmes. The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education started to collect reports from registered QA agencies (covering most of the EHEA) on joint study programmes evaluated or accredited according to the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes. This database could be considered another source of information on joint degree programmes offered around Europe.

51. **Level of implementation: partial.** While all Adherents provide comprehensive information on recognised domestic higher education institutions/providers, information on providers and programmes operating across borders is not as universal. Frequently, CBHE providers and programmes are not included in information portals or are not clearly identified as cross-border provision.

Providing information for internationally mobile students

52. The Recommendation calls on Adherents to protect students from the risks of misleading information and guidance. A specifically vulnerable group are internationally mobile students, who are arriving in a new country. They need to navigate an unfamiliar information landscape, often in another language, and they may also be targeted by agents or other third parties that recruit students. The Recommendation recognises that mobile students can also face challenges with the recognition of acquired education, which is addressed in section C. The Guidelines suggest that higher education institutions/providers “should take full responsibility to ensure that the information and guidance provided by their agents is accurate, reliable and easily accessible” [16.c)]. The assessment of implementation considers both the level of information provision for internationally mobile students and what, if any, policies are in place to ensure guidance provided by agents and third parties is reliable.

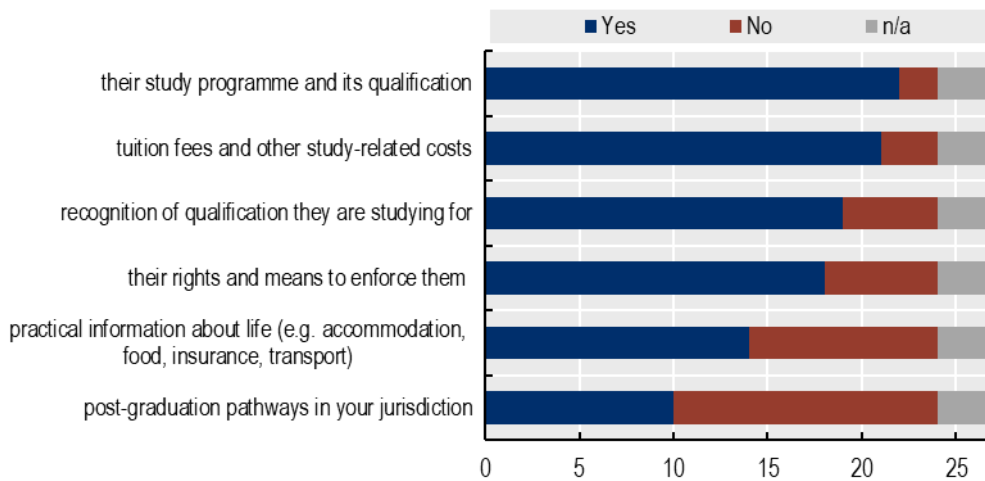
53. To ensure adequate information for internationally mobile students, most countries have developed a dedicated information portal for incoming students on degree mobility and, in some instances, also credit mobility. All but two Adherents have developed an information portal for international students, either as a governmental portal or an otherwise publicly supported portal. Two accession candidate countries do not have such portals. All four covered countries without an information portal are in Latin America. The full list of covered countries and their information portals for international students is available in Appendix Table B.1. The depth and scope of information differ between covered countries, but all at least provide information about available study options. Often, the portals provide information on funding and scholarship opportunities, and a range of topics outside higher education, including obtaining a visa and a permit, finding housing, expected living expenses and many other topics. Frequently, information portals are in the national language, in English and some cases also in other widely used languages.

54. Respondents reported having widely adopted guidance or regulation that requires higher education institutions/providers to ensure that incoming international students are provided with information on broad set of topics (Figure 2). Most Respondents reported that institutions in their jurisdiction are expected to ensure provision of information about study programmes and their qualifications (22 of 24 Respondents), tuition fees and other costs (21), recognition of qualifications (19) and students’ rights and means to enforce them (18). Fewer provided is information about practical aspects of life, such as accommodation, food, insurance or transport (13) and post-graduation pathways (10). Three Respondents

reported a lack of regulation or guidance; however, these three Respondents indicated that the institutions usually provide most of this information. In Canada, where education falls under provincial jurisdiction, some provinces and territories reported that all this information is required. Pan-Canadian (through the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials), federal and provincial/territorial information resources ensure the public availability of information pertaining to qualifications, fees, quality assurance, recognition and practical aspects of life. In Germany, there is also no federal regulation, but most institutions provide this information, as there is sector-wide guidance – the National Code of Conduct for German Universities Regarding International Students – to which most institutions are committed (German Rectors’ Conference, 2009^[42]). In Finland, there is an expectation that this information be provided, but there is no regulation. Individual responses by country are provided in Appendix Table A.5.

Figure 2. Required information to be provided by providers to international students

Required by regulation or system-wide guidance



Note: Ranked ascending based on number of affirmative responses. Three Respondents reported as having no formal regulation or guidance at the national level, they are shown as “n/a”.

55. Higher education institutions/providers in 16 Respondents (out of 24) are reported to use agents or other third parties to recruit international students, while another six indicated the Respondents do not have information on this. In the Netherlands, the use of agents was recently stopped as part of a commitment by institutions to slow down the growth of the number of incoming mobile students. The level of regulation and guidance about agents differs greatly (see individual responses in Appendix Table A.4). Seven Respondents do not have any regulation out of 16 that use agents. In Australia and New Zealand, there are requirements placed on institutions to regulate the use of agents. In Canada, while there is no federal regulation, provinces and territories where providers use agents tend to have regulations about their use which place requirements on institutions. The United Kingdom has the UK Agent Quality Framework, which provides guidance to students, providers and agents. The framework applies to all providers registered as licensed student sponsors. As part of the framework, education agents need to undergo training and adhere to the National code of ethical practice for education agents to be included in a database of certified counsellors (British Council, 2025^[43]). In Austria and France, the regulation on recruitment agents is centralised.

56. **Level of implementation: substantial.** Nearly all Adherents (38 out of 40) provide information to incoming mobile students in the form of information portal. In most responding Adherents, regulation

and guidance for institutions/providers ensure that international students receive information about their study programme, tuition, their rights and recognition. However, information on practical aspects of life and post-graduation pathways is not always included. While the use of agents and other third parties for recruitment is common in 15 Respondents, the use of such agents or third parties is only regulated in seven of these Respondents.

Providing information on procedures, criteria and results of external quality assurance

57. The provision of adequate information is also expected to apply to providers and the transparent application of the external QA system. The Guidelines suggest that governments “provide accurate, reliable and easily accessible information on the criteria and standards for registration, licensure, quality assurance and accreditation” [14.d)] and QA bodies ought to “provide accurate and easily accessible information on the assessment standards, procedures, and effects of the quality assurance mechanisms” [20.d)]. The implementation assessment examines whether Adherents and their QA bodies publish information about QA procedures, criteria and the standards used.

58. Desk research looked at 57 QA bodies, seven of them in accession candidate countries. In countries with subnational responsibility for QA, multiple QA bodies were selected. In Belgium two (but one in Flanders is joint with QA body in the Netherlands), in Canada four (representing four provinces with the largest share of enrolment – Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and Alberta), in the United Kingdom two (the Office for Students that operates in England, and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education which operates in other countries) and in the United States seven regional accrediting bodies (recognised by the Department of education). All reviewed QA bodies have publicly available information about procedures, criteria and standards for QA processes, which often also include requirements for registration and licensure (see Appendix Table B.3). Similarly, all but one reviewed QA bodies publish results of the external QA processes (see Appendix Table B.3). However, not all QA bodies publish evaluation reports and detailed assessments, but rather provide online a list of accredited, reviewed or evaluated institutions and programmes. The information about procedures and criteria is primarily oriented towards domestic providers; only a few QA bodies provide any specific information targeted to cross-border programmes or providers.

59. **Level of implementation: substantial.** Reviewed QA bodies in Adherents provide information for providers about the procedures, standards and criteria, and results of external QA. However, there is limited targeted information for cross-border providers and programmes.

B. Ensuring validity and portability of qualifications through a comprehensive quality assurance

60. The international validity and portability of qualifications are enhanced if they are delivered within a framework of a comprehensive external QA and regulatory system. This section focuses on the different components of QA and regulation, the extent which they are oriented to CBHE, on whether these systems ensure comparable quality across borders and the quality of academic staff and their working conditions.

Establishing a comprehensive system of regulation and external quality assurance for cross-border providers and programmes

61. The Guidelines recommend that the governments establish or encourage the establishment of “a comprehensive, fair and transparent system of registration or licensing for cross-border higher education providers” [14.a)] and “a comprehensive capacity for reliable quality assurance and accreditation of cross-border higher education provision” [14.b)]. Not only should this system be comprehensive, but the QA arrangements should cover different CBHE modalities, adapting to changes and developments in CBHE [20.a)]. Furthermore, QA bodies are expected to “develop systems of internal quality assurance and regularly undergo external evaluations” [20.f)]. The implementation assessment focuses on the scope of

the regulatory and QA framework, and whether it specifically covers different CBHE modalities in addition to domestic provision.

62. Since the adoption of the Recommendation, external QA systems have evolved. The UNESCO Higher Education Policy Observatory shows that most Adherents and accession candidate countries have legislation that establishes an external QA system comprising one or several QA bodies (37 out of 47 countries). Further desk research revealed that the few remaining countries not included in the Observatory data collection also have a system of external QA (six countries). In the remaining four countries (Belgium, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States), responsibility for external QA lies with sub-national authorities and there is evidence of broad coverage. The overview of all identified QA bodies and other relevant information for all covered countries is provided in Appendix Table B.3. There are some differences between Respondents, with some focusing regulation on the provider as a whole institution, while others individually approve, monitor and evaluate individual programmes, and some countries have a mixture of the two, where programmes are grouped in broader categories, study fields or sub-fields, and are regulated as whole. Nevertheless, these findings confirm that all Adherents and accession candidate countries have some form of external QA system.

63. Information from Respondents, summarised in Table 6, shows a broad application of requirements for domestic providers that, in most cases, need to receive initial approval before starting operation, are monitored and need to regularly report, and undergo external QA evaluation. However, when it comes to cross-border providers – IBCs and joint/binational institutions – the application of requirements is mixed. Six Respondents apply the same scope of requirement for domestic and cross-border providers. Eleven apply fewer requirements. Eight Respondents indicated that no requirements are placed on hosted or sending cross-border providers in their jurisdiction. Overall, Adherents apply fewer requirements on CBHE providers, and the requirements do not equally cover all modalities of cross-border providers, hosted or sending. The distribution of responsibility for each of the requirements differs between Respondents, some jurisdiction have QA bodies covering most processes, in others also national/federal and subnational governments, as well as public organisations have a role, the overview of how responsibilities are distributed in Respondents is in Appendix Table A.3.

Table 6. Regulatory and quality assurance requirements of providers

Contrast between domestic and cross-border providers

	Domestic public				Domestic private				Hosted IBCs					Hosted joint/binational institutions					Sending IBCs					Sending joint/binational institutions						
	Respondent	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	
AUS																														
AUT		[1]																												
BEL-FL																														
BEL-FR																														
CAN																														
CHE																														
CHL																														
CRI																														
DEU																														

	Domestic public				Domestic private				Hosted IBCs					Hosted joint/binational institutions					Sending IBCs					Sending joint/binational institutions					
	Respondent	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency
DNK										n/a					n/a					n/a									None [5]
EST										n/a					n/a					None [6]									n/a
FIN								n/a		None [7]					n/a					None [7]									n/a
FRA																													
GBR-ENG [8]																													
GBR-SCT [8]										None					None														
GBR-WLS [8]																													
HUN															n/a														n/a
ITA																													
JPN															n/a														n/a
NLD																				None									
NZL										None [9]					None [9]														None [9]
PRT										n/a					n/a														n/a
SVK															n/a					None									n/a
SWE [10]										n/a					n/a						n/a								n/a
BGR (a)																													n/a
HRV (a)										None					n/a						n/a								n/a
ROU (a)															n/a														n/a

Note: Black cell – requirement present, red cell or text – response change by the Secretariat based on desk research, dark grey – subnational responsibility with some requirements applicable, light grey – requirement not reported, white (n/a) – not applicable as this type of provision does not exist. See Appendix Table C.1 for country codes.

Evaluation/ accreditation – requirement to seek recognised external quality assurance,

Notice/registration – requirement to provide information about the start of operation,

Approval/licensure – requirement to seek permission prior to starting operation,

Reporting/ monitoring – requirement to share information during operation,

Evaluation/ accreditation – requirement to seek recognised external quality assurance,

Recognition/ equivalency – requirement for awarded qualification to be recognised as equivalent to local qualification, not relevant for domestic programmes.

(a) accession candidate country

1. In Austria, only universities of applied sciences, private universities and higher education institutions need to undergo an institutional accreditation prior to the start of operation (approval/licensure), public universities and university colleges of teacher education are established by law.
2. In Canada, for IBCs, some provinces and territories reported having some of these requirements for IBCs, while others reported none. For joint/binational institutions, one province or territory reported no requirements in place.
3. In Switzerland, for hosted IBC, it operates as a private organisation and is not accredited or recognised under Higher Education Act at federal level. For sending IBCs, no specific federal requirements apply to higher education institutions regarding CBHE provision but lie within the competence and autonomy of each higher education institution and its cantonal jurisdiction.
4. In Germany, exact requirements for cross-border providers are specified at the state level and could potentially vary between federal states. Generally, a form of registration and recognition would apply in most cases.
5. Joint institution operated abroad in collaboration with Danish universities is not regulated as a whole, but as programmes.
6. In Estonia, no special requirements for IBCs; programmes provided are accredited individually.
7. IBC operating in Finland is not considered to be part of the Finnish higher education system, and no requirements are placed on it. A campus of a recognised Finnish institution is under their autonomy, and no additional requirements apply.

8. In England, Scotland and Wales (United Kingdom), if the programme offered, branch campus or joint/binational institution is administered by a domestically registered provider, then it is monitored and evaluated. Register providers would be also required to inform their respective regulator of major changes, such as establishing an IBC. However, if the IBC is a separate entity, the same regulation is not applied.
9. New Zealand Qualifications Authority does not regulate CBHE providers, unless they offer a micro-credential or qualification listed on the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework.
10. Higher education institutions in Sweden are granted degree-awarding powers unlimited in time but may be withdrawn if standards are not upheld. The Swedish Higher Education Authority collects data, monitors compliance, and conducts institutional reviews of quality assurance.

64. A similar pattern of regulatory and QA requirements is observed regarding study programmes (Table 7). Domestic programmes operated by public or private providers are broadly regulated, except in jurisdictions that focus exclusively on institutional-level regulation. In terms of cross-border programmes, the largest number of requirements are applied to joint or dual/multiple degree programmes. The overview table shows that in many instances, at least for some cross-border programmes, a broad spectrum of requirements is applied. At the same time, there are noticeable gaps in the regulatory and QA systems in some Respondents, which sometimes appear to overlook franchise programmes, validation and articulation arrangements, and recognised distance programmes.

Table 7. Regulatory and quality assurance requirements of study programmes

Contrast between domestic and cross-border programmes

Respondent	Domestic public				Domestic private				Hosted franchise				Hosted validation				Hosted distance				Joint /dual /multiple				Sending franchise				Sending validation				Sending distance					
	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency					
AUS*									n/a									n/a																				
AUT*																											n/a				n/a							
BEL-FL									n/a					n/a													n/a				n/a							
BEL-FR					n/a				n/a					n/a													n/a				n/a							
CAN									n/a					some [1]				some [1]					some [1]				n/a				n/a				n/a			
CHE									n/a					some [3]				n/a					some [3]				n/a				some [3]				n/a			
CHL*									n/a																		n/a				n/a				n/a			
CRI									n/a																		n/a											
DEU									some [2]					some [2]				some [2]					some [2]				n/a				some [2]				some [2]			
DNK									n/a																		n/a				n/a				n/a			
EST*									n/a					n/a													n/a				n/a				n/a			
FIN*					n/a				n/a																		n/a				n/a				n/a			
FRA																																						
GBR-ENG*																															[4]				[4]			
GBR-SCT*																															[4]				[4]			
GBR-WLS*																															[4]				[4]			
HUN																											n/a											
ITA									n/a					n/a													n/a				n/a				n/a			
JPN*									n/a									n/a									n/a								n/a			
NLD														n/a													n/a											
NZL									n/a					n/a													n/a											

Respondent	Domestic public				Domestic private				Hosted franchise				Hosted validation				Hosted distance				Joint /dual /multiple				Sending franchise				Sending validation				Sending distance			
	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency	Notice/ registration	Approval/ licensure	Reporting/ monitoring	Evaluation/ accreditation	Recognition/ equivalency			
PRT																																				
SVK*																																				
SWE		[5]		[5]																																
BGR (a)																																				
HRV (a)																																				
ROU (a)									some [6]								some [6]																			

Note: Black cell – requirement present, red cell or text – response change by the Secretariat based on desk research, dark grey – subnational responsibility with some requirements applicable, light grey – requirement not reported, white (n/a) – not applicable as this type of provision does not exist. See Appendix Table C.1 for country codes.

Evaluation/ accreditation – requirement to seek recognised external quality assurance,

Notice/registration – requirement to provide information about the start of operation,

Approval/licensure – requirement to seek permission prior to starting operation,

Reporting/ monitoring – requirement to share information during operation,

Evaluation/ accreditation – requirement to seek recognised external quality assurance,

Recognition/ equivalency – requirement for awarded qualification to be recognised as equivalent to local qualification, not relevant for domestic programmes.

* These jurisdictions have primarily QA on the level of providers rather than individual programmes; however, some providers might still need to seek programme registration, evaluation, etc.

(a) accession candidate country

1. In Canada, some provinces and territories reported having some of these requirements, while others reported none.
2. In Germany, exact requirements for cross-border programmes are specified at the state level and could potentially vary between federal states. Generally, a form of registration and recognition would apply in most cases.
3. In Switzerland, no specific federal requirements apply to higher education institutions regarding CBHE provision but lie within the competence and autonomy of each higher education institution and its cantonal jurisdiction.
4. In England, Scotland and Wales (United Kingdom), if the CBHE programme offered is administered by a domestically registered provider, then it is monitored and evaluated on institutional level. However if it is a separate entity, the same regulation is not applied.
5. In Sweden, different types of higher education institutions need to be granted degree-awarding powers (i.e. seek approval). Public universities only need to apply for degree-awarding powers in case of professional qualifications, and degrees in the fine, applied and performing arts. University colleges furthermore need to obtain degree-awarding powers also for master's degrees (120 credits) and doctoral degrees. Independent higher education providers need to apply for permission for all types of degrees. Evaluation of programmes is not done systematically; the Swedish Higher Education Authority conducts thematical evaluations.
6. In Romania, hosted CBHE programmes are required to respect the laws and regulations of sending country, so the exact requirements differ.

65. The overview of requirements placed on study programmes only includes recognised cross-border distance and online programmes. But distance and online programmes are often not formally recognised but are widely delivered across borders. An earlier study by the Secretariat highlights the rapid development of online provision, especially during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, but how quality guidelines have been slow to adapt to this new reality (Staring et al., 2022^[44]). The Higher Education Policy Survey carried out by the OECD in 2022 found that in countries that authorise online study programmes, few limitations are imposed on their operation (Broberg and Golden, 2023^[45]).

66. In most Respondents, requirements for cross-border providers and programmes are not distinct from those applied to domestic providers and programmes. They are not distinct for 14 Respondents. For

seven, there are some distinct or additional requirements for CBHE provision, and for one Respondent, requirements are completely different (individual responses in Appendix Table A.2).

67. A review of identified national QA agencies confirms that most regularly undergo external QA evaluations, and they have developed an internal QA system. Out of 57 identified QA agencies, 28 are full members of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). ENQA has an extensive review process for full members, which requires agencies to have an internal QA system and to undergo regular external evaluation (ENQA, 2021_[46]). Similarly, the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) includes among full members eight identified QA agencies, with two being members of both APQN and ENQA – QA bodies from Kazakhstan and Türkiye. APQN also requires members to have an internal QA system and to undergo external reviews (APQN, 2017_[47]). Additionally, five national QA agencies (from Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the United Kingdom and Thailand) have been recognised as aligned to the International Standards and Guidelines as evaluated by the INQAAHE appointed panel and thus have in place an internal system of QA (INQAAHE, 2022_[32]). Other agencies are also members of regional and global networks, as explored in section D., but these do not have such stringent membership criteria.

68. **Level of implementation: partial.** All Adherents have established a comprehensive system of QA and regulation, but these systems are primarily oriented towards domestic providers and programmes. While some responding Adherents apply the same or similar requirements to cross-border providers and programmes as for domestic providers and programmes. Many regulatory and QA frameworks do not fully cover all the various CBHE modalities and impose fewer requirements on such provision. Especially, with distance and online study programmes, some QA frameworks are not able to keep up with developments. Most Adherents have a QA body that has internal systems of QA and that is regularly externally evaluated.

Assuring quality and regulating cross-border student mobility

69. Governments and QA bodies are recommended by the Guidelines to ensure the quality of CBHE in its various modes [14.b), 20.a)]. The Recommendation and Guidelines primarily focus on the quality of cross-border programmes and providers, focusing less on individual mobility of students and staff. This Report considers what policies are in place to protect students and ensure the quality of their credit and degree mobility experiences.

70. Most Respondents confirm that regulation or guidance requires higher education institutions to respect specific quality standards related to the education and support provided to incoming students undertaking credit mobility in their institution (23 out of 27 Respondents). Slightly fewer Respondents have similar regulation or guidance applying to students on outgoing student credit mobility in partner institutions (18 out of 27). An overview of individual responses is provided in Appendix Table A.4.

71. Nearly all Respondents (21 out of 24) have in place specific permits and visas² for study. In most Respondents (15 out of 21 that have study visa), these permits are often connected with mandatory requirements for providers. In these countries, providers need to meet specific requirements to sponsor a study visa and allow students to renew their permits, where this is applicable. At least 16 Respondents also have voluntary guidance for providers that host international students, and 4 Respondents mentioned the existence of an excellence framework, in which providers meeting certain requirements can gain recognition as a good destination for international students. An overview of individual responses is provided in Appendix Table A.4.

² Not all internationally mobile students need a study visa or permit, for example in the case of mobility of European Union and European Economic Area citizens within the Schengen Area.

72. **Level of implementation: substantial.** Most responding Adherents have in place regulation and guidance that requires providers to meet criteria to be able to host internationally mobile students. Regulation and guidance also cover the quality of credit mobility in most responding Adherents.

Ensuring comparable quality across borders

73. The Recommendation highlights, as one of its key points, the need to have higher education institutions/providers committed to “to provide cross-border higher education of comparable quality to that offered in the home country” [Recommendation 1.b)]. The Guidelines further recommends that providers “ensure that programmes they deliver are of comparable quality” [16.a)] and providers have internal QA processes that “take full responsibility for delivering higher education qualifications comparable in standard in their home country and across borders” [16.c)]. The implementation assessment focuses on whether there are regulations and guidance that would require providers to make these commitments and ensure comparable quality. A way to assure this is by promoting international collaboration of QA bodies to harmonise “standards, criteria and assessment procedures and undertake joint assessment projects” [20.g)]. At the same time, the Guidelines also expect the programmes delivered to “take into account the cultural and linguistic sensitivities of the receiving country” [16.a)]. To ensure comparable quality while reflecting specific contexts in which education is delivered, providers should consult and respect the QA body of the receiving country [16.d)]. The assessment also takes into consideration recent efforts to harmonise QA approaches and the measures in place to ensure that providers engaged across borders consult and respect QA in foreign countries in which education is delivered.

74. Nine Respondents (out of 27) require all cross-border programmes or providers operating in their jurisdiction to demonstrate education delivered is of comparable quality to equivalent programmes delivered in the sending (home) jurisdiction. One Respondent has such a requirement only for some CBHE modalities. Ten Respondents do not have such a requirement; others were not able to respond. In the case of cross-border programmes or providers operated abroad by or in partnership with higher education providers (or other entities) from their jurisdiction, the requirement to demonstrate education delivered is of comparable quality was reported by fifteen Respondents. Four Respondents do not have such a requirement, and six were unable to provide an answer. For both questions, Canada and Germany do not have a federal-level regulation, as QA is a sub-national responsibility. Both responses indicate that some requirements are in place, but they differ and are not applied in all states, provinces or territories. Individual responses are available in Appendix Table A.2.

75. There have been great efforts internationally to harmonise QA procedures and standards. The most advanced are the 2022 International Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education, developed by INQAAHE and the 2015 European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (first adopted in 2005) adopted by the EHEA ministers and implemented by relevant QA bodies. While a diversity of approaches to external QA remains, many of the principles and even specific indicators are similar across countries (OECD, 2025^[48]). Greater harmonisation and the development of international standards and guidelines allow for cross-border providers and programmes to have more transparent expectations and to deliver education of comparable quality across borders.

76. Thirteen Respondents require that all CBHE modalities operating in their jurisdiction need to be either registered, approved or accredited in the sending jurisdiction. For two Respondents, this requirement applies only to some CBHE modalities. Seven Respondents did not report any requirement, and three were not able to answer. For cross-border programmes and providers operating abroad (where the Respondent is the sending jurisdiction), only six Respondents require all CBHE modalities to be registered, approved or accredited in the receiving country. For another Respondents, these requirements only apply to some CBHE modalities. Eight Respondents did not have any requirements and five were unable to answer. Again, Canada and Germany were not able to provide an answer on a federal level, with different

approaches adopted by the provinces, territories and states in these countries. Individual responses are provided in Appendix Table A.2.

77. **Level of implementation: substantial.** QA mechanisms create requirements to deliver education of comparable quality across borders in a small majority of the responding Adherents. Widely disseminated international standards and guidelines and widespread collaboration of QA bodies across regions and globally exist, bringing about more harmonisation of approaches to external QA. The majority of responding Adherents have requirements for CBHE providers to be registered, approved or accredited in the receiving country where education is delivered, or the cross-border provider is based.

Ensuring the quality of academic staff and their working conditions

78. The Guidelines highlight the vital role of academic staff in providing quality teaching and research. Thus, they recommend higher education institutions/providers to take into account the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel and “to support good working conditions and terms of service, collegial governance and academic freedom” [16.b)]. This is especially relevant as CBHE may involve academic staff being employed in a different country and by a different entity, thus creating potential risks of differing working conditions and a loss of certain protections which are not applicable abroad. For students, the risk is that teaching staff in CBHE provision might not be subject to the same quality requirements as in the home jurisdiction of the provider. Even when students are in a comparable study programme, the quality of the delivery and support provided by the teaching staff may be different.

79. Half of the Respondents to this question (20 valid responses) require respect for quality standards relating to teaching staff in programmes in their jurisdiction and their working conditions. For CBHE provision exported from their jurisdiction, the same requirement is observed in ten out of 18 Respondents. The specific requirements in Canada differ by province or territory. Further clarifications by Respondents suggest that exact requirements are also dependent on whether the provider is registered and accredited in the country. The quality standards for teaching staff and protection of their working conditions are in these countries tied to their registration or accreditation. Individual responses are available in Appendix Table A.2.

80. **Level of implementation: partial.** About half of the responding Adherents (10 out of 19) who answered this question have in place some protections to ensure the quality of teaching staff and their working conditions, even if they are teaching abroad.

C. Easing recognition of qualifications

81. The recognition of qualifications is crucial to ensuring that learners can fully benefit from their experiences with CBHE, whether through learning mobility or by studying in a cross-border programme or at a cross-border provider. This is particularly important in a globalised academic environment, where increasing numbers of students pursue education across borders and in TNE. This section focuses on efforts by Adherents to develop and become parties to international conventions and agreements, the provision of information on recognition processes and improving professional recognition of foreign qualifications, acquired abroad or through CBHE.

Developing and becoming a party to international recognition conventions and agreements

82. The Guidelines recognise ongoing efforts to establish supranational frameworks, conventions and agreements to facilitate the recognition of qualifications. Specifically, the Guidelines recommend that Adherents “consider becoming party to and contribute to the development and/or updating of the appropriate UNESCO regional conventions” [14.e)]. Given recent developments, the assessment will focus on whether countries are a party to their relevant UNESCO regional convention – the Lisbon Recognition

Convention for Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand, the Tokyo Convention for Asia-Pacific and the Buenos Aires Convention for Latin America and the Caribbean. Furthermore, the implementation assessment considers whether countries are a party to the UNESCO Global Convention, as it is an extension of the existing regional conventions. The implementation assessment also considers whether governments develop and encourage other bilateral or multilateral recognition agreements [14.f)].

83. The Lisbon Recognition Convention is ratified by 35 Adherents and accession candidate countries (out of 47), the Tokyo Convention is ratified by five Adherents and the Buenos Aires Convention is ratified only by one accession candidate country. Three covered countries ratified both the Tokyo and Lisbon conventions. Overall, only six Adherents (out of 40) and three accession candidate countries (out of seven) have not ratified any regional recognition convention. Most of the covered countries that have not ratified any UNESCO regional convention are in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Buenos Aires Convention is also the most recent regional convention to be adopted, with more countries working on its ratification at the time of writing. The full list of countries and regional conventions that they have ratified is in Appendix Table B.4.

84. As of July 2025, the 2019 UNESCO Global Convention has been ratified by 15 Adherents and 2 accession candidate countries. Additionally, while on federal level, Belgium did not ratify the Global Convention, all three Communities, which hold responsibility for education, already approved it. All of these countries are already a party to one of the regional conventions. Several Adherents have actively contributed to the development of the Global Convention and its implementation. The list of countries that have ratified the Global Convention is in Appendix Table B.4.

85. All Respondents are a party to some other bilateral or multilateral recognition agreements. Individual responses are provided in Appendix Table A.6. A few notable multilateral agreements aim to achieve automatic recognition of qualifications. The Benelux-Baltic agreement on automatic diploma recognition was signed in 2021 between the Benelux countries (Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg) and the Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) ((n.a.), 2021^[49]). Similarly, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden (and the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland) in 2022 revised an earlier Nordic Declaration on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education – the “Reykjavik Declaration”, which aims to facilitate an automatic recognition of qualifications in the region (Nordic Council of Ministers for Education and Research, 2022^[50]).

86. **Level of implementation: substantial.** Most Adherents (85%), especially in Europe and Asia-Pacific, have ratified regional conventions on the recognition of qualifications. At the time of writing, 15 Adherents have already ratified the 2019 UNESCO Global Convention. All responding Adherents have provided examples of further bilateral and multilateral recognition agreements, with some even establishing automatic recognition of higher education qualifications.

Providing information on the assessment and recognition of qualifications

87. The UNESCO regional conventions and the Global Convention expect state parties to designate an entity that would act as a competent recognition authority. The Guidelines also recommend that Adherents establish an academic recognition body, which would be responsible for the recognition of qualifications awarded in other countries. The Guidelines recommend that academic recognition bodies “provide clear, accurate and accessible information on the criteria for the assessment of qualifications” [23.f)] and “provide necessary information on professional recognition” [23.d)]. The implementation assessment focuses on whether Adherents and accession candidate countries provide necessary information about the process and criteria for recognition of qualifications and, where relevant, professional recognition.

88. Based on responses and desk research, all 47 Adherent and accession candidate countries have an official website which describes the process of recognition of qualifications obtained abroad, with two

separate websites in Belgium. A full list of the websites is available in Appendix Table B.4. Most of these websites have information about academic recognition, to continue studies, and professional recognition, for the purpose of seeking employment. However, further criteria might apply in cases where graduates seek employment in regulated professions with either governments or professional organisations.

89. Recognition of qualifications can be particularly difficult when it comes to CBHE qualifications. As shown in Table 6 and Table 7, many Respondents require recognition and equivalency procedures. A student at a cross-border provider operating in their country might receive a foreign qualification and thus needs to undergo a process of recognition for the qualification, even though they have not left the country. While such a requirement is within norms, students might not always be aware from the start about these specific requirements applied to CBHE provision, as highlighted in section A.

90. **Level of implementation: full.** All Adherents have developed systems for recognition of qualifications and are transparently providing information about the criteria and procedures.

Facilitating professional recognition of qualifications

91. Professional recognition of qualifications is essential to enable individuals with foreign qualifications, gained by studying abroad or in CBHE, to access the labour market in another country, particularly regulated professions. The Guidelines give this responsibility primarily to academic recognition bodies and professional bodies, recommending recognition bodies to “provide necessary information on professional recognition” [23.d)] and for professional bodies to provide “international level of up-to-date, accurate and comprehensive information on mutual recognition agreements” [25.d)]. Professional bodies are also recommended to “develop and implement assessment criteria and procedures for comparing programmes and qualifications to facilitate the recognition of qualifications” [25.c)]. The implementation assessment focuses on the provision of information on professional recognition and on mutual recognition agreements. Furthermore, the assessment examines existing multilateral agreements and arrangements in place, and what sectors and countries they cover.

92. Most reviewed websites for academic recognition (listed in Appendix Table B.4) include information or a link to information about procedures and criteria for professional recognition. Individual professional bodies tend to publish information on membership criteria, which sometimes also covers how to proceed in cases where individuals hold qualifications from another country. Professional bodies also tend to provide information on mutual recognition agreements, to which they are signatories. However the greatest progress in this area has come through the actions of governments within the framework of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (hereafter APEC), where countries supported the development of the APEC Inventory of Mutual Recognition Agreements for Professional Qualifications and Licensure. This captures 236 agreements and covers most non-European Adherents (Australian APEC Study Centre, 2023^[51]).

93. APEC study found that most existing mutual recognition agreements cover only a single sector, and they are primarily bilateral with only a few multilateral arrangements (Ziguras and Barker, 2024^[52]). Most advanced recognition agreements and tools are in engineering. There are some prominent examples, such as the three accords developed by the International Engineering Alliance: the 1989 Washington Accord has twenty signatories, of which eleven are from Adherents and two from accession candidate countries, as well as the 2001 Sydney and 2002 Dublin Accords with fewer signatories (International Engineering Alliance, 2025^[53]). The ENGINEERS EUROPE have developed an EUR ING certificate, which acts as a guarantee of competence of engineering programmes and qualifications it includes, thus facilitating mutual recognition of qualifications across countries (ENGINEERS EUROPE, 2023^[54]). Another sector with some progress is architecture, for example the 2008 Canberra Accord which has signatories from five Adherents (Canberra Accord on Architectural Education, 2023^[55]) and the European Union has also established a mutual recognition agreement with Canada for architects (European Commission, 2022^[56]). But in healthcare, especially in nursing, where substantial international

professional mobility take places, only a few international recognition agreements exist (Ziguras and Barker, 2024_[52]).

94. Besides sector-specific agreements, some comprehensive mutual recognition agreements cover a broader set of professions, as identified by APEC. The Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement between Australia and New Zealand includes recognition of occupational registrations across many sectors. In Latin America, the 1902 Convention on the Practice of Learned Professions – Mexico Convention – covers nine countries, among them Chile, Costa Rica and Peru. Chile also has nine comprehensive bilateral mutual recognition agreements with a range of countries (Ziguras and Barker, 2024_[52]). Perhaps the largest professional recognition agreement is in the European Union, in the form of the 2005 Professional Qualifications Directive, amended in 2013. The Directive established a system of automatic professional recognition of qualifications in countries of the European Single Market (EU Members, as well as Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein) for seven professions: nurses, midwives, doctors, dentists, pharmacists, architects and veterinary surgeons (European Union, 2013_[38]).

95. **Level of implementation: partial.** The actions to facilitate professional recognition are uneven. Mutual recognition agreements and professional recognition information are prevalent in a few sectors, like engineering and architecture and in certain regions. However, the professional recognition of qualifications is rarely multilateral and is very limited, especially regarding healthcare qualifications.

D. Intensifying international co-operation

96. Assuring quality provision of CBHE requires stakeholders to co-ordinate and collaborate nationally and across borders. The Recommendation asks Adherents to intensify co-operation, especially among QA agencies. The Guidelines expand this and recommend that Adherents encourage more engagement among stakeholders in one country and between stakeholders in the sending and receiving countries. This section primarily focuses on whether governments encourage consultations and co-ordination, and what supra-national networks and partnerships exist between QA bodies, higher education institutions/providers and on academic recognition.

Encouraging consultations and co-ordination among quality assurance stakeholders

97. The Guidelines recommended that governments “consult and coordinate amongst the various competent bodies for quality assurance and accreditation both nationally and internationally” [14.c)]. This calls on governments to actively promote and facilitate the engagement.

98. A majority of Respondents indicated that the government (or other regulatory body with responsibility over higher education) in their jurisdiction facilitates consultation and co-ordination between the various competent bodies for the QA, regulation and recognition of CBHE. This is the case in at least 17 Respondents, out of 21 complete responses, while governments facilitate co-ordination internationally in at least 16 Respondents, out of 20 complete responses. For this question, responses from subnational territories of both Belgium and the United Kingdom are reported as one jurisdiction each. Individual responses are provided in Appendix Table A.6.

99. **Level of implementation: substantial.** A significant majority of responding Adherents encourage and facilitate co-ordination and consultations nationally and internationally across stakeholders engaged in assuring quality provision of CBHE.

Establishing, sustaining and strengthening national and international networks of stakeholders

100. Co-operation among higher education institutions/providers, QA and academic recognition bodies within international networks helps to ensure consistency, transparency and trust in CBHE. These networks facilitate the sharing of best practices, reliable information on institutions and programmes and, in some

situations, also develop common standards and guidelines. The Guidelines recommend that higher education institutions/providers participate “in sector organisations and inter-institutional networks at national and international levels” [16.e)]. Providers should use these networks to share good practices and “to facilitate the process of recognition by acknowledging each other’s qualifications as equivalent or comparable” [16.f)]. The Guidelines also recommend QA bodies to establish, sustain and strengthen regional and international networks, “to exchange information and good practice, disseminate knowledge, increase the understanding of international developments and challenges as well as to improve the professional expertise of their staff and quality assessors” and to “improve awareness of disreputable providers and dubious quality assurance and accreditation bodies” [20.b)]. Lastly, the Guidelines recommend that academic recognition bodies “establish and maintain regional and international networks” to “exchange information and good practice, disseminate knowledge, increase the understanding of international developments and challenges and improve the professional expertise of their staff” [23.a)].

101. Nearly all covered countries have one or more national sector organisations that include most higher education institutions/providers or their leaders within the jurisdiction. At least one formalised sector organisation was not identified in five covered countries – three Adherents and three accession candidate countries. The full list of identified organisations is provided in Appendix Table B.5.

102. All but eight covered countries have at least one higher education institution or their national sector organisation as members of the International Association of Universities. The IAU conducts a regular Global Survey on Internationalization of Higher Education that also maps developments in CBHE and actively works in the area. Besides IAU, many national sector organisations or individual higher education institutions/providers participate in regional networks, such as the European University Association (EUA), the European Association for the Applied Sciences in Higher Education (EURASHE), the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE) and the Union of Universities of Latin America and the Caribbean (UDUALC). All but seven covered countries have some membership in these regional networks. The least networked region seems to be Asia-Pacific, where no large membership network organisation was identified. EUA, EURASHE, IOHE and UDUALC were all found to cover the topic of internationalisation, sharing good practices and organising events on various topics, including elements of cross-border higher education – individual mobility and transnational education. However, these organisations are primarily focused on advocacy and sharing of good practices, and less on facilitating the process of recognition, as this tends now to be governed by larger inter-governmental agreements and conventions. But there are a few examples, such as Universities Australia, which has separate agreements with sectoral organisations in France, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Peru on recognition of qualifications (Universities Australia, 2025^[57]). Overall, only two covered countries – both Adherents – have no higher education institution/provider or sector organisation as a member in either the IAU or any of the regional networks. An overview of membership in the IAU and regional networks is available in Appendix Table B.5.

103. Out of 57 identified QA bodies, listed in Appendix Table B.3, 42 are full members of the INQAAHE. INQAAHE actively works on QA in CBHE, organises events on this topic, facilitates exchange on the topic and even conducts professional development for QA bodies. Furthermore, QA bodies are members of regional networks – 28 are in the ENQA and five are affiliated to ENQA. Eight QA bodies are in the APQN and two have an observer status. Finally, nine QA bodies are in the Ibero-American Quality Assurance System of Higher Education. At least some QA bodies from all covered countries are members or affiliated with at least one of the international networks. Not all QA bodies in Canada and the United States are internationally active. An overview of QA bodies and the networks of which they are members is available in Appendix Table B.3. These networks are engaged with questions of quality provision in CBHE. For example, between 2013 and 2016, ENQA worked with APQN, and QA bodies in Australia, France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom to map approaches to QA of CBHE (Al-Sindi et al., 2016^[31]).

104. Thirty-nine out of 47 Adherents and accession candidate countries have organisations that are part of one or multiple regional networks that facilitate collaboration and exchange of information on academic recognition of qualifications. The largest is the European Network of National Information Centres on Academic Mobility and Recognition, which works closely with the European Union's Network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres, together known as the ENIC-NARIC Networks. While the networks are nominally European, they also include Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States. The ENIC-NARIC Networks include 33 Adherents and three accession candidate countries. The second network is the Asia-Pacific Network of National Information Centres, with five organisations of Adherents participating. Third is the Regional Network of National Information Centres for Latin America and the Caribbean (CINALC), which was only established in 2023 and is starting to expand in the region, but now only includes Peru – an accession candidate country. The establishment of CINALC is an important development, as no other Adherents or accession candidate countries in the region have an organisation in any of the international networks. The full list of countries and participation of their organisations in networks is provided in Appendix Table B.5.

105. **Level of implementation: full.** Nearly all the Adherents have most higher education institutions/providers in national sectoral organisations and at least some in the IAU or regional networks (for both 38 out of 40 Adherents). Many of these networks, especially international ones, facilitate exchange of good practices on quality provision in CBHE. QA bodies are also well networked globally and in regional associations, which covers at least one QA body in each Adherents. Nearly all Adherents are also represented in international networks on recognition of qualifications (36 out of 40), sharing information about higher education systems and best practices.

Policy recommendation 3. Assist non-member economies in implementing the Guidelines

106. The Recommendation calls on Adherents to support non-Adherents in implementing the Guidelines and to strengthen their capacity in this regard. This element was not included in the Survey, and the implementation assessment is based on desk research.

107. An indication of increasing assistance to the non-Adherents is the addition of six Adherents since the 2025 Report. Four countries have become OECD Member countries (Colombia, Costa Rica, Latvia and Lithuania), and both Brazil (since May 2019) and Kazakhstan (since April 2016) have become Adherents to the Recommendation.

108. A second indication can be found in the initiatives supporting non-adhering countries to implement the guidelines. Here, the most notable examples are projects supported by UNESCO and the World Bank to develop the UNESCO-APQN toolkit: regulating the quality of cross-border education (concluded in 2006), and the European Commission supporting the project Quality Assurance of Cross-border Higher Education (finalised in 2016) (Al-Sindi et al., 2016^[31]; UNESCO Bangkok, 2006^[30]). But rather than individual Adherents, these projects were supported by international organisations. These projects also tended to be run and oriented towards QA bodies and their international networks, rather than governments themselves. Some other projects focusing on QA more broadly have touched on CBHE or TNE specifically, but no recent projects that have an objective of advancing the implementation of the Guidelines, among Adherents and more broadly, have been identified.

109. **Level of implementation: minimal.** The list of Adherents is growing, but there are no examples of recent efforts by Adherents to assist and support non-Adherents in implementing the Guidelines. The most active stakeholders are QA bodies and their international networks that work among themselves, among and beyond the adhering countries, to exchange on QA standards, guidance and procedures, including in the area of CBHE.

Policy recommendation 4. Disseminate the Guidelines to all relevant stakeholders

110. The Recommendation calls on Adherents to disseminate the Guidelines widely to all relevant stakeholders. This question was not covered by the Survey, and therefore the assessment of this recommendation relies on desk research and the findings of a background paper, commissioned by UNESCO to examine the implementation of the Guidelines, assess their relevance and review developments in the field (Hopbach, 2022_[58]).

111. The Guidelines are widely referred to by QA bodies and international networks of QA bodies, such as INQAAHE, APQN and ENQA. The Guidelines seem to be mentioned especially frequently in the European context, with references made in the EHEA documents, such as the Bologna Process Implementation Report (European Commission, 2020_[59]) and in the recent Council of Europe Recommendation on countering education fraud (Council of Europe, 2022_[39]). The reference could also be found in the International Quality Principles by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, an association of QA bodies in the United States (Council for Higher Education Accreditation, 2015_[60]). The UNESCO-commissioned paper on the implementation found a broad acceptance of the Guidelines and references to them in many national contexts. However, there are differences between countries in the scale of their CBHE and the prominence of this issue in policy discussions, and thus also awareness of the Guidelines and other international documents. The underlying principles of the Guidelines are widely accepted, but awareness of the Guidelines across stakeholders appears to be low (Hopbach, 2022_[58]). The Guidelines are most known among professionals working on the recognition of qualifications or QA.

112. **Level of implementation: partial.** The Guidelines are disseminated among stakeholders and professionals working on QA and recognition of qualifications, particularly in Europe. However, awareness of the Guidelines among other stakeholders and more widely is low.

Policy recommendation 5. Encouraging and supporting stakeholders to implement the Guidelines

113. The Recommendation calls on Adherents to encourage and support other stakeholders – higher education institutions/providers, QA bodies, student bodies, academic recognition bodies and professional bodies – to implement the Guidelines, as relevant to the national context. The implementation of this recommendation is assessed based on assessments across the other elements above. Due to a lack of available information, the assessment does not cover student bodies.

114. The guidance and regulation from Adherents seem to be particularly effective when it comes to international students, as in most Respondents, higher education institutions/providers are required to meet certain requirements to host international students, including providing them with important relevant information. In this way, governments are encouraging and requiring providers to implement the Guidelines.

115. Governments have also created requirements, directly or through QA bodies, for higher education institutions/providers engaging in CBHE to be registered, approved or accredited in the other country, where education is delivered, or the cross-border provider is based. Respondents also indicate that a small majority of jurisdictions place requirements on CBHE providers to ensure the quality of teaching staff and their working conditions.

116. However, the level of encouragement and support from the government seems to be particularly low in relation to professional bodies and in promoting professional recognition of qualifications across borders. There has been substantial involvement of governments in promoting recognition of qualifications, especially through the regional conventions and the Global Convention, which also advanced the role of academic recognition bodies.

117. Most Respondents indicate that their government (or another entity responsible for the governance of higher education) encourages consultations and co-ordination across stakeholders, both nationally and internationally, to ensure quality provision in CBHE (Appendix Table A.6). Higher education institutions/providers, QA bodies, academic recognition bodies and national information centres seem to be engaged especially in developing, sustaining and strengthening international networks.

118. Assessment of the fourth Recommendation suggests that the Guidelines are not widely disseminated, especially beyond the QA and academic recognition bodies. Awareness of their existence is the first and necessary step to facilitate the implementation of the Guidelines.

119. **Level of implementation: Substantial implementation** on the side of QA bodies and academic recognition bodies, as through regulation and international networks, many of these bodies are actively working towards implementing the Guidelines. **Partial implementation** by higher education institutions/providers: while the majority of the providers, as indicated by Respondents, are regulated to ensure comparable quality and other minimal standards, they do not always have broader knowledge of the Guidelines. **Minimal implementation** on the part of professional bodies, which seem to be largely inactive in facilitating cross-border professional recognition of qualifications.

3 Dissemination

120. The OECD Secretariat has in recent years provided presentations for different stakeholders, presentations to governmental representatives, as part of the OECD Group of National Experts on Higher Education [[EDU/EDPC/GNEHE/M\(2024\)2](#)], presentations for the ENQA General Assembly (Roy, 2022_[61]) and the Bologna thematic peer group on quality assurance (Roy, 2023_[62]). The efforts of the OECD Secretariat also reflect that the Recommendation is mentioned in the background documents for the meeting of the G20 Education Working Group (G20 South Africa, 2024_[63]).

121. As already highlighted in the assessment of the fourth recommendation, dissemination efforts by Adherents are partial. Some QA bodies and international networks of QA bodies are working to advance work on the QA of different CBHE modalities. Many international standards and guidelines for QA mention the Recommendation and the Guidelines. However, QA bodies and their international networks are not necessarily actively disseminating the Guidelines further.

122. Despite relatively few attempts to disseminate the Recommendation and the Guidelines, they continue to be widely cited in the literature. A query of the Scopus database found 241 texts published between 2005 and 2024 that exactly mentioned the Guidelines. Out of these, 110 publications were released between 2015 and 2024, since the last implementation report (Elsevier, n.d._[64]). The same query in the Google Scholar database found 786 documents published in the period 2005-2024 that mentioned the Guidelines. Out of which 342 results are from the period 2015-2024. In both cases, the Guidelines were slightly more frequently mentioned during the first decade of their existence (2005-2014), while the number of mentions slightly decreased in the last decade (2015-2024). However, the Guidelines are still being mentioned.

123. These findings, desk research and consultations suggest that the Recommendation and the Guidelines are being used, although they are not widely disseminated. More efforts to disseminate the Recommendation to all relevant stakeholders and non-Adherents should be explored.

4 Summary and conclusions

124. This section summarises the state-of-play regarding implementation and dissemination of the Recommendation and presents the main results and conclusions from this Report.

Implementation

125. Overall, the Recommendation is assessed to be implemented to a substantial extent. A majority of Respondents and Adherents have implemented most of the elements of the Recommendation. This is broadly in line with the previous implementation Reports, which both found a high level of implementation. However, as the methodology has been refined for this most recent Report, it is not possible to make a more detailed comparisons and assessments of the progress in the implementation. Out of 19 Elements assessed in the Report, three were evaluated to be fully implemented, eight as substantially implemented, six partially implemented and two only minimally implemented (See Table 8).

Table 8. Overview of the level of implementation

Policy recommendations		Elements	Level of implementation
1. Develop a framework for the quality provision of cross-border higher education 2. Take steps to implement the Recommendation as set forth in greater detail in the Guidelines	a) Providing adequate information	Establishing national information centres	Full
		Providing information on recognised higher education providers and study programmes	Partial
		Providing information for internationally mobile students	Substantial
		Providing information on procedures, criteria and results of external quality assurance	Substantial
	b) Ensuring the validity and portability of qualifications through a comprehensive quality assurance	Establishing a comprehensive system of regulation and external quality assurance for cross-border providers and programmes	Partial
		Assuring quality and regulating cross-border student mobility	Substantial
		Ensuring comparable quality across borders	Substantial
		Ensuring the quality of academic staff and their working conditions	Partial
	c) Easing the process of recognition of qualifications	Developing and becoming a party to international recognition conventions and agreements	Substantial
		Providing information on the assessment and recognition of qualifications	Full
		Facilitating professional recognition	Partial
	d) Intensifying international co-operation	Encouraging consultations and co-ordination among quality assurance stakeholders	Substantial
Establishing, sustaining and strengthening national and international networks of stakeholders		Full	
3. Assist non-member economies in implementing the Guidelines		Minimal	
4. Widely disseminate the Guidelines to all relevant stakeholders		Partial	
5. Encourage and support stakeholders to implement the Guidelines	Quality assurance bodies	Substantial	
	Academic recognition bodies	Substantial	
	Higher education providers	Partial	
	Professional bodies	Minimal	

126. **Policy recommendations 1-2.a)** Nearly all Adherents have established a national information centre and provide broad information on recognised higher education providers and programmes. However, this information provision often fails to distinguish or entirely omits CBHE provision. Nearly all Adherents have established information portals for internationally mobile students. Most responding Adherents also require or encourage higher education institutions/providers to provide specific information to international students. All reviewed QA bodies provide information on procedures, criteria and most also on results, but many do not have specific information for CBHE providers.

127. **Policy recommendations 1-2.b)** All Adherents have established a framework of external QA and regulation. However, these frameworks remain primarily oriented towards domestic provision, often overlooking or not specifically including requirements to oversee the quality provision of CBHE modalities. Where relevant, most responding Adherents indicated that they have regulation and guidance to assure the quality of conditions for cross-border student mobility and regulation and QA to ensure comparable quality of programmes delivered in multiple locations. Some responding Adherents require higher education institutions/providers to ensure the quality of academic staff and their working conditions in CBHE.

128. **Policy recommendations 1-2.c)** Nearly all Adherents have become a party to the relevant regional convention on recognition of qualifications. Most Adherents have yet to adopt the 2019 Global Convention. All Adherents have an official website which describes the process of recognition of qualifications obtained abroad. While progress with international collaboration on academic recognition is substantial, there has been only partial progress on international professional recognition. Identified agreements on professional recognition tend to be bilateral and focus only on a single sector (e.g. engineering, architecture), with only a few examples of broader and multilateral agreements that would allow the wider professional recognition of qualifications obtained abroad.

129. **Policy recommendations 1-2.d)** A majority of responding Adherents indicated that they support and encourage co-operation among relevant stakeholders nationally and internationally. Nearly all Adherents have higher education institutions/providers, QA bodies and academic recognition bodies that are part of international networks, which facilitate peer exchange, staff development and develop guidance and ideas on ensuring the quality of CBHE.

130. **Policy recommendations 3-4.** The list of Adherents has expanded by six countries since the 2015 Report, four new OECD Member countries and two non-member countries. However, there is very limited evidence of any assistance or support from Adherents towards non-Adherents to implement the Guidelines. Most activity is taking place among QA bodies and their international networks, which have implemented projects that referenced the Guidelines, but such activity has been very limited recently. The Guidelines are disseminated among QA and academic recognition bodies, particularly in Europe, but awareness of the Guidelines more broadly, among other stakeholders and across countries, is low.

131. **Policy recommendation 5.** Most Adherents encourage and support QA and academic recognition bodies to implement the Guidelines, especially as these bodies tend to work in international networks on these topics. Regulation and guidance are in place in some countries that encourage higher education institutions/providers to take actions to implement the Guidelines or at least some of their elements. The encouragement and support for professional bodies seems to be limited.

Dissemination

132. The Secretariat has engaged with stakeholders over recent years, particularly governments and quality assurance bodies, and presented the Recommendation and developments in the field since its adoption. Among stakeholders, quality assurance bodies remain the most active in disseminating and using the Recommendation and the Guidelines. The Guidelines continue to be referenced in the literature and in

adopted international standards and guidelines for quality assurance. More efforts to disseminate the Recommendation to other relevant stakeholders and non-Adherents should be explored.

Continued relevance

133. Regulatory, quality assurance and information policies have evolved since the adoption of the Recommendation, but Adherents still do not consistently include CBHE modalities in their policies. In relation to academic recognition of qualifications, the new generation of regional conventions and the Global Convention provide more comprehensive and detailed framework than the Recommendation. The Recommendation and the Guidelines are in some places outdated in terms of the terminology used, only marginally address specific challenges emerging with online cross-border provision and make limited reference to the cross-border mobility of students and academic staff. However, the principles of the Recommendation remain widely relevant. In particular, QA of TNE is emerging as a growing priority, with the adoption of the Council of the EU Recommendation on a European quality assurance and recognition system in higher education (2025_[40]), UNESCO/Council of Europe Revised Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education (2025_[41]) and support from State Parties to work on QA including that of TNE as part of the Global Convention. In the context of growing international student mobility and TNE, their broader adoption and implementation could address many of the persistent challenges and risks associated with CBHE. More dissemination of the Recommendation and the Guidelines, support and guidance for their implementation to all the relevant stakeholders is needed. As such, no revisions to the Recommendation are deemed necessary at this time.

Next steps

134. While the Recommendation is assessed to be implemented to a substantial extent, there remain many areas where further efforts are needed to fully implement it. In line with the previous Council recommendations and findings of this Report, Adherents could consider a) systematically including different modalities of cross-border higher education in information provision and ensuring they are covered by appropriate regulation and quality assurance frameworks, b) encouraging and facilitating broad agreements between professional bodies and other relevant bodies to ease the professional recognition of foreign and CBHE qualifications, c) raising awareness of the Recommendation and the Guidelines nationally and internationally, and d) assisting and supporting all relevant stakeholder and non-Adherents to appropriately implement the Guidelines.

135. The EDPC, through the GNE-HE, should continue to survey the implementation of the Recommendation and report to the Council again in ten years. The rationale for a longer reporting period is a relatively slow evolution of regulatory provisions and implementation practices across Adherents. An earlier report to Council would be prepared if changes in the field warrant it. In the meantime, depending on Part I budget allocations and voluntary contributions, the Secretariat would conduct work dedicated to the internationalisation of higher education. This work would aim to better map the scale and scope of cross-border higher education and to develop more specific policy recommendations to advance the implementation of the Recommendation. When relevant, the Secretariat should engage and co-ordinate with UNESCO and other international and regional stakeholders.

Appendix A. Survey responses

The Secretariat received a total of 27 responses to the Survey from 24 countries – 21 Member Adherents: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and three accession candidate countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, and Romania. The Secretariat received two responses for Belgium, separately for the Flemish and French communities and three responses for the United Kingdom, separately for England, Scotland and Wales. See Appendix Table C.1 for country codes. As a rule, countries are ordered alphabetically based on their code, first are OECD Members, then non-Member Adherents and last are accession candidate countries.

Appendix A. Survey responses provides an overview of responses from five (out of six) sections of the survey. The fifth section of the survey primarily (5. Information about higher education system) collected information that was complemented by desk research, and it is summarised in Appendix B. Collected information.

Survey responses are coded using the following key:

- ✓ Yes
- x No
- [#] Note
- n/k Do not know, also includes no response
- n/a Not applicable

1. Scope of cross-border higher education

The first section of the Survey focused on types of modalities present in Respondents and the general trends surrounding them. See Table 3 for definitions of each modality. The Appendix Table A.1 provides an overview of CBHE modalities present.

Appendix Table A.1. Scope of cross-border higher education

Respondent	1a. Cross-border programmes and providers Which of the following forms (modalities) of cross-border higher education are operating in the jurisdiction or are operated abroad by or in partnership with higher education providers (or other entities) from the jurisdiction?											1b. Cross-border people mobility Does the jurisdiction have policies and initiatives that support or encourage:			
	Q101. Franchise programme		Q102. Validation/articulation arrangement		Q103. Joint or double/multiple degree programme	Q104. [Recognised] distance programme		Q105. International branch campus		Q106. Joint (binational) institution		Q112. International student credit mobility (part of studies)		Q113. International student degree mobility (full studies)	
	Host	Send	Host	Send		Host	Send	Host	Send	Host	Send	Host	Send	Host	Send
AUS	n/k	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/k	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/k
AUT	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
BEL-FL	x	x	n/k	n/k	✓	✓	n/k	n/k	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BEL-FR	x	x	x	n/k	✓	✓	x	n/k	x	x	x	✓	n/k	✓	n/k
CAN [1]	n/k	n/k	✓	n/k	✓	✓	n/k	✓	✓	✓	n/k	✓	✓	✓	✓
CHE	x	x	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓ [2]	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
CHL	x	x	✓	x	✓	x	x	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓	n/k	n/k
CRI	x	x	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DEU	✓	n/k	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DNK	x	x	✓	x	✓	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓ [3]	✓
EST	x	x	x	x	✓	x	x	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
FIN	x	x	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
FRA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
GBR-ENG	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
GBR-SCT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
GBR-WLS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HUN	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	n/k	n/k	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	x
ITA	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
JPN	x	x	✓	✓	✓	x	n/k	✓	✓	x	n/k	✓	✓	✓	✓
NLD	n/k	n/k	n/k	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NZL	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓
PRT	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
SVK	x	n/k	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
SWE	x	x	x	x	✓	x	x	x	x	x	x [4]	x	✓	x	x
BGR (a)	✓	✓	n/k	n/k	✓	x	x	n/k	✓	✓	n/k	✓	✓	✓	n/k
HRV (a)	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
ROU (a)	n/k	x	n/k	x	✓	n/k	x	n/k	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓

Notes: (a) accession candidate country

1. In Canada, as education is under provincial jurisdiction, the scope, policies and initiatives around CBHE differ by province and territory. In this table, marked yes (✓) if at least one province/territory reported existence of CBHE programme or provider. Policies and initiatives that support or encourage cross-border mobility are present in some provinces and territories. There is a pan-Canadian outreach portal (EduCanada) that supports international student degree mobility through information provision, run through collaboration between federal government (Global Affairs Canada) and provinces and territories through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada. Furthermore, federal government also funds several scholarship schemes for degree and credit mobilities.
2. In Switzerland, there is an international branch campus present in the country; however it is considered as a private organisation and is not accredited or recognised under Higher Education Act at federal level. The campus is present in the country on its own behalf, awarding foreign qualifications that would need undergo regular academic or professional recognition procedure.
3. In Denmark, a political agreement from 2021 reduced the number of students from EU/EEA countries receiving student grants (SU) by reducing the number of courses offered in English at business academies and university colleges. The government plans to increase the number of courses offered in English again in specific regions (outside the four largest cities) and fields of education (STEM).
4. In Sweden, Stockholm School of Economics (SSE) has together with Swedish and Latvian Government co-founded SSE Riga in 1993. In 2010, the ownership of SSE Riga was transferred to a foundation, where SSE remains one of the primary actors and holds positions in governance of SSE Riga. Sweden does not consider SSE Riga to be part of its higher education system.

Besides international branch campuses identified from responses, desk research based on data from the Cross-Border Education Research Team (2025^[15]) showed existence elsewhere. Specifically presence of international branch campuses in 16 countries: Czechia, Greece, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Spain, Türkiye, United States, Brazil, Kazakhstan, Argentina, and Indonesia. Furthermore, providers from seven countries are operating branch campuses elsewhere: Czechia, Ireland, Korea, Poland, Spain, Türkiye, and the United States.

In addition to the modalities presented captured above, Respondents could report the existence of other modalities of CBHE programmes or providers (survey item: Q107). The response from Sweden mentioned the World Maritime University, which was established by the International Maritime Organization, a specialised agency of the United Nations. While located in Sweden, it operates under a special status. In 2019 it asked the Swedish government for the degree-awarding powers for master and doctoral degrees in maritime affairs, which was granted by the Government in 2022 after positive assessment from the Swedish Higher Education Authority. The response from France mentioned the existence of the French Schools Abroad (Écoles françaises à l'étranger), established by the State in number of other countries. They are fully independent and primarily focus on research, promoting collaboration between the host country and France. However they only enrol doctoral students, thus their role in education is minimal.

In the Survey, Respondents were also asked to provide available resources on the scale of the CBHE (Q108-109, Q114) and provide an assessment on how the CBHE developed since 2014, the year of the last implementation survey (Q110-111, Q115). Key takeaways from the responses are mentioned in the Report and this information will be further analysed in the upcoming policy paper.

2. Regulation and quality assurance of cross-border programmes and providers

The second section of the Survey focused on what requirements are applied to domestic and CBHE programmes and providers. Individual responses for survey items Q201-Q216 are already presented in the Report, in Table 6 and Table 7. Therefore the Appendix Table A.2 will only focus on remaining survey items in the section.

Appendix Table A.2. Regulation and quality assurance of cross-border programmes and providers

Respondent	Q217. Distinct regulatory and QA requirements on CBHE	2c. Funding of CBHE		2d. Registration, approval and accreditation across borders		2e. Comparable quality across borders		2f. Quality of teaching personnel and working conditions	
		Q218. CBHE eligible for public funding	Q219. Consequence of regulatory and QA requirements on public funding	Q220. Hosted CBHE required to be recognised in home jurisdiction	Q221. Sending CBHE required to seek recognition in receiving country	Q222. Hosted CBHE required to provide comparable quality	Q223. Sending CBHE required to provide comparable quality	Q224. Hosted CBHE required to assure quality of teaching and working conditions	Q225. Sending CBHE required to assure quality of teaching and working conditions
AUS	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	✓✓	✓✓
AUT	✓ [1]	x	n/a	✓✓	n/k	✓	n/k	x	n/k
BEL-FL	x	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
BEL-FR	x	✓	✓✓	✓✓	n/a	✓✓	n/a	✓✓	n/a
CAN	n/a	[6]	n/a	[11]	[11]	n/a	[11]	[11]	[11]
CHE	x [4]	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓✓	x
CHL	n/k	n/k	n/k	x	x	x	x	x	x
CRI	x	x	n/a	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
DEU	✓	✓ [9]	✓ [9]	[12]	[12]	[12]	[12]	x	✓
DNK	✓ [2]	x	n/a	n/k	n/k	x	✓✓	x	✓✓
EST	✓✓	✓ [7]	x	✓	n/k	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
FIN	x	✓ [8]	✓ [8]	x	x	x	x	x	x
FRA	x	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
GBR-ENG	x [5]	✓	n/k	x	x	x	✓✓	✓ [14]	✓ [14]
GBR-SCT	x	n/k	x	x	x	x	✓✓	✓ [14]	✓ [14]
GBR-WLS	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓✓	✓ [14]	✓ [14]
HUN	✓	✓	x	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	✓✓
ITA	n/a	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
JPN	✓	✓ [10]	n/a	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
NLD	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	x
NZL	✓ [3]	x	x	x	✓	x	✓✓	[13]	[13]
PRT	x	✓	x	✓✓	✓	x	✓✓	✓✓	x
SVK	x	x	x	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	x	x
SWE	x	✓✓	✓✓	x	x	x	x	x	x
BGR (a)	n/a	✓	n/a	✓✓	x	x	x	n/a	n/a
HRV (a)	x	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
ROU (a)	x	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	n/k	✓✓	x	✓✓

Notes: ✓✓ applies to all modalities of CBHE
✓ applies to some modalities of CBHE
(a) accession candidate country

1. In Austria, regulatory and QA requirements apply to all domestic providers, there is no difference in the requirements whether they operate domestic or in a foreign country.
2. In Denmark, joint programmes can be accredited by a foreign accrediting body registered by the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education.
3. In New Zealand, approval and accreditation is only required if the student is physically studying at an offshore campus studying or training towards the award of a New Zealand qualification or degree level qualification at level 7-10 (ISCED 6-8)
4. In Switzerland, all domestic higher education institutions need to be accredited to operate as such. Institutional accreditation is comprehensive and no additional requirements, but same requirements apply for cross-border higher education.

5. In England (United Kingdom), the Office for Students pays particular attention to certain factors arising where an institution or entity is based overseas, e.g., the degree of transparency over ownership, governance and financial viability, but conditions of registration remain the same for all registered providers regardless of where they are operating.
6. In Canada, two provinces/territories reported that CBHE programs and providers are not eligible for public funding.
7. In Estonia, If the provider is a public university, then they are eligible for public funding. There is no special funding instrument, but there are no restrictions to use funding received by block grant.
8. In Finland, higher education institutions are given public funding as a lump sum based on the performance-based model. There is no separation whether a degree has been awarded in cross-border cooperation with foreign institution.
9. For German CBHE operated abroad: This depends on the programme financing as well as the model of education abroad. For CBHE operated in jurisdiction: This would generally also depend on the type of partnership and presence it has within Germany. Organisations like the DAAD, the German Research Council, the Humboldt Foundation are all publicly funded and support various CBHE. Inter-University CBHE activities may be subsidised by public funds via participating universities. The eligibility of private organisations would generally require checks on an individual basis.
10. CBHE programs and providers from Japan with operations overseas are eligible to receive public funding, but overseas CBHE in Japan are generally not eligible to receive public funding.
11. In Canada, for items Q220, Q221, Q223, Q224 and Q225, at least one province/territory has reported that these requirements are present. However not all provinces/territories have these requirements.
12. Germany for items Q220-Q223, no nationwide statement for can be made here but it is generally assumed that the programmes are subject to quality assurance regulations in the home country of the provider in question.
13. In New Zealand, if an offshore provider wishes to deliver programmes leading to awards on the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework, then they must be registered providers with the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and meet these criteria. There are not strict requirements, but they specify the qualification and experience requirements for academic staff.
14. In England, Scotland and Wales (United Kingdom), respective regulators focus on student outcomes and the quality of students' learning and experiences but not working conditions for personnel.

Full questions:

Q217. Are the requirements that apply to cross-border higher education (selected in Q206-Q216) distinct/additional to requirements that apply to domestic higher education (Q201-Q205)?

Q218. Are cross-border programmes and providers (in and from the jurisdiction) eligible to receive public funding?

Q219. Do these requirements (selected in Q205-Q215) have consequences on the public funding of cross-border higher education?

Q220. Hosting: Are cross-border programmes/providers operating in the jurisdiction required (by regulations or guidance in the jurisdiction) to be registered/approved/accredited in the sending (home) jurisdiction?

Q221. Sending: Are cross-border programmes/providers operated abroad by or in partnership with higher education providers (or other entity) from the jurisdiction required (by regulations or guidance in the jurisdiction) to be registered/approved/accredited in country they operate?

Q222. Hosting: Are cross-border programmes/providers operating in the jurisdiction required (by regulations or guidance in the jurisdiction) to demonstrate programmes delivered in the jurisdiction are of comparable quality to equivalent programmes delivered by the provider in the sending (home) jurisdiction?

Q223. Sending: Are cross-border programmes/providers operated abroad by or in partnership with higher education providers (or other entity) from the jurisdiction required (by regulations or guidance in the jurisdiction) to demonstrate programmes delivered in the receiving jurisdiction are of comparable quality to equivalent programmes delivered in the jurisdiction?

Q224. Hosting: Are cross-border programmes/providers operating in the jurisdiction required to respect specific quality standards relating to teaching personnel delivering the programmes in the jurisdiction and the working conditions of their personnel?

Q225. Sending: Are cross-border programmes/providers operated abroad by or in partnership with higher education providers (or other entity) from the jurisdiction required (by regulations or guidance in the jurisdiction) to respect specific quality standards relating to teaching personnel delivering the programmes in receiving jurisdiction and the working conditions of their personnel?

3. System of regulation and quality assurance in the jurisdiction.

The third section of the Survey focused on the distribution of responsibility over the framework of regulation and quality assurance in the case of CBHE. Respondents could have chosen up to three options for each category, if the responsibility is shared between multiple bodies.

Appendix Table A.3. System of regulation and quality assurance in the jurisdiction

Bodies primarily responsible for the application of requirements to cross-border programmes and providers

Respondent	Q301. Notice/ registration (requirement to provide information about start of operation)	Q302. Approval/ licensure (requirement to seek permission prior starting operation)	Q303. Reporting/ monitoring (requirement to share information during operation)	Q304. Evaluation/ accreditation (requirement to seek recognised external quality assurance)	Q305. Recognition/ equivalency (requirement for awarded qualification to be recognised as equivalent to local qualification)
AUS	Nat./fed. gov QA body	Nat./fed. gov QA body	Nat./fed. gov QA body	Nat./fed. gov Prof. body	Nat./fed. gov Prof. body
AUT	QA body	QA body	QA body	QA body	Public org
BEL-FL	Subnat. gov	Subnat. gov	Subnat. gov	QA body	Subnat. gov
BEL-FR	Public org	Public org	Public org	QA body	Subnat. gov
CAN	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
CHE	Subnat. gov Recog. body	Subnat. gov	Subnat. gov	Recog. body	Subnat. gov Recog. body
CHL	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k
CRI	Recog. body	Recog. body	Recog. body	Nat./fed. gov	Recog. body
DEU	Subnat. gov	Subnat. gov	Subnat. gov	Subnat. gov QA body	Subnat. gov
DNK	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k
EST	Nat./fed. gov	Nat./fed. gov	Nat./fed. gov	QA body	Nat./fed. gov
FIN	n/a	Nat./fed. gov	Nat./fed. gov Public org	QA body	n/a
FRA	Nat./fed. gov	Nat./fed. gov	Recog. body	QA body Nat./fed. gov	Public org
GBR-ENG	n/a	n/a	n/a	Public org	NIC
GBR-SCT	n/a	n/a	Public org QA body	QA body	NIC
GBR-WLS	n/a	n/a	Public org	QA body	NIC
HUN	Public org	Public org	Public org	QA body	NIC Public org Nat./fed. gov
ITA	Nat./fed. gov	Nat./fed. gov	Nat./fed. gov	QA body	Nat./fed. gov
JPN	Nat./fed. gov	Nat./fed. gov	Nat./fed. gov	QA body	QA body
NLD	QA body	QA body	QA body	QA body	Public org
NZL	Public org	Public org	Public org	Public org	Public org Prof. body
PRT	n/a	Public org	Public org	QA body	Recog. body
SVK	Nat./fed. gov	Nat./fed. gov	Nat./fed. gov	QA body	n/a
SWE	Recog. body	QA body Nat./fed. gov	Public org QA body	QA body	n/a
BGR (a)	Nat./fed. gov	Nat./fed. gov	Nat./fed. gov	Nat./fed. gov	Nat./fed. gov
HRV (a)	n/a	n/a	QA body Nat./fed. gov	QA body	n/a
ROU (a)	n/a	QA body Nat./fed. gov	QA body	QA body	Public org

Notes: (a) accession candidate country

- In Canada, some provinces reported that their relevant departments/ministries (subnational gov.) and/or public organisations and/or QA bodies are primarily responsible for the application of these requirements. Provinces and territories co-ordinate with the federal government, which assesses study permits (for international students) and enforces a compliance regime requiring institutions to verify letters of acceptance and report bi-annually on the status of permit holders.

Nat./fed. gov. National (federal) government

Subnat. gov. Subnational (state, province, community) government

Public org. Public (or government dependent) organisation

QA body Domestic quality assurance and accreditation body

NIC National information centre

Recog. body Academic recognition body

Prof. body Professional body

4. International student mobility

The fourth section of the Survey focused on the areas of international student mobility, looking at a) recruitment agents, b) regulation and guidance for international students, and c) assuring quality of credit student mobility. Survey responses are presented in two separate tables, Appendix Table A.4 covering recruitment agents, visa, regulation and guidance for higher education providers and quality of credit mobility. Appendix Table A.5 focuses on what information and guidance are higher education institutions / providers required by regulation or guidance to provide to international students.

Appendix Table A.4. International student mobility

Respondent	4a. Recruitment agents and other third parties			4b. Regulation and guidance on international students			4c. Quality of international student credit mobility		
	Q401. Do higher education institutions/ providers operating in the jurisdiction use agents (or other third parties) to recruit international students?	Does the jurisdiction regulate student recruitment agents or other third parties:		Q404. Does the jurisdiction provide specific study visa(s) for international students?	Q405. Does the jurisdiction regulate or guide higher education institutions/ providers regarding their hosting of international students?			Are higher education institutions/ providers operating in the jurisdiction required (by regulation or guidance) to respect specific quality standards related to the education and support provided to:	
		Q402. operating in the jurisdiction to recruit potential students for providers abroad	Q403. operating abroad on behalf of providers in the jurisdiction		mandatory requirements	excellence framework	voluntary guidance		
AUS	✓	✓ HEIs	✓ HEIs	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
AUT	✓	✓ central	n/k	✓ [3]	x	x	x	✓	x
BEL-FL	n/k	n/a	n/a	✓ [3]	✓	✓	x	✓	✓
BEL-FR	x	n/a	n/a		x	✓	✓	x	n/a
CAN	some ✓ [1]	n/k	some ✓ HEIs [1]	✓	✓	x	✓	some ✓ [4]	some ✓ [4]
CHE	x	n/a	n/a	✓ [3]	x	x	x	✓	n/a
CHL	n/k	n/a	n/a	✓	x	x	x	✓	x
CRI	✓	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓
DEU	n/k	n/a	n/a	✓ [3]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DNK	✓	x	x	✓ [3]	✓	x	x	✓	✓
EST	n/k	n/a	n/a	✓ [3]	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
FIN	✓	x	[2]	✓ [3]	x	x	x	✓	x
FRA	✓	n/a	✓ central	✓ [3]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
GBR-ENG	✓	n/k	✓ HEIs & central (voluntary)	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
GBR-SCT						x	✓	✓	✓
GBR-WLS						x	✓	✓	✓
HUN	✓	n/a	n/a	✓ [3]	✓	x	x	✓	n/a
ITA	✓	x	✓ HEIs	✓ [3]	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
JPN	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NLD	x	n/a	n/a	✓ [3]	✓	n/k	✓	✓	✓
NZL	✓	✓ HEIs	✓ HEIs	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓
PRT	✓	x	x	✓ [3]	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
SVK	✓	x	x	✓ [3]	x	x	x	x	x
SWE	✓	x	x	✓ [3]	x	x	x	x	x
BGR (a)	n/k	n/a	n/a	x [3]	✓	n/k	✓	✓	✓
HRV (a)	✓	x	x	x [3]	x	x	✓	x	x
ROU (a)	n/k	n/a	n/a	✓ [3]	✓	x	✓	✓	✓

Notes: (a) accession candidate country

✓ HEIs Yes, through requirements on institutions

✓ central Yes, centrally

1. Some provinces and territories, but not all, in Canada reported that agents or other third parties are used to recruit international students (Q401). In these cases, the agents or third parties are regulated (Q403).
2. In Finland, there is currently no regulations, but there is an amendment in parliament which gives some obligations to agents recruiting students to Finnish higher education institutions.
3. Per European Union treaties and agreements, citizens of European Economic Area countries (EU members, Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway) and Switzerland are eligible to reside for the purpose of study in another country. They might be required to register with local authority and in case of Switzerland seek residence permit, but they do not require visa.

Appendix Table A.5. Information and guidance for international students

Respondent	Q406. Are higher education institutions/providers operating in the jurisdiction required (by regulation or guidance) to ensure that incoming international students are provided with information about:						Q407. Are higher education institutions/providers operating in the jurisdiction required (by regulation or guidance) to provide international students with additional support (if needed):						
	tuition fees and other study-related costs	practical information about life (e.g. accommodation, food, insurance, transport)	their study programme and its qualification	recognition of qualification they are studying for	post-graduation pathways in the jurisdiction	their rights and means to enforce them	assistance with visa and residence permit	assistance with accommodation and commute	adjustment programme (e.g. orientation, sessions on local culture or academic life)	language course	academic support (e.g. tutoring, supplemental courses, workshops)	recognition of prior education	family member programme (e.g., day care)
AUS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x [5]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
AUT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
BEL-FL	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
BEL-FR	x	x	✓	✓	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	x
CAN	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
CHE	x [4]	x [4]	x [4]	x [4]	x [4]	x [4]	x [4]	x [4]	x [4]	x [4]	x [4]	x [4]	x [4]
CHL	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CRI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
DEU	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
DNK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	x
EST	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	X	x	x	✓	x	✓	x
FIN	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
FRA	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	X
GBR-ENG	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	x	x	x	x	x
GBR-SCT	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	x	x	x	n/k	x
GBR-WLS	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	x	x	✓	n/k	x
HUN	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x
ITA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
JPN	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
NLD	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k
NZL	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	✓	✓	x
PRT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/k
SVK	✓	x	✓	x	✓	x	x	x	x	x	✓	x	x
SWE	✓	x	✓	x	x	x	n/k	x	x	x	x	✓	x
BGR (a)	✓	x	✓	x	x	✓	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k
HRV (a)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x [6]	x [6]	x [6]	x [6]	x [6]	x [6]	x

Respondent	Q406. Are higher education institutions/providers operating in the jurisdiction required (by regulation or guidance) to ensure that incoming international students are provided with information about:						Q407. Are higher education institutions/providers operating in the jurisdiction required (by regulation or guidance) to provide international students with additional support (if needed):						
	tuition fees and other study-related costs	practical information about life (e.g. accommodation, food, insurance, transport)	their study programme and its qualification	recognition of qualification they are studying for	post-graduation pathways in the jurisdiction	their rights and means to enforce them	assistance with visa and residence permit	assistance with accommodation and commute	adjustment programme (e.g. orientation, sessions on local culture or academic life)	language course	academic support (e.g. tutoring, supplemental courses, workshops)	recognition of prior education	family member programme (e.g., day care)
ROU (a)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x

Notes: (a)accession candidate country

1. In Canada, some provinces and territories reported that all this information is required, but there is no federal regulation.
2. In Finland, there is an expectation that this information be provided, but there is no regulation.
3. In Germany, most higher education institutions provide information and guidance regarding most if not all these topics, but there is no formal federal requirement.
4. In Switzerland, specific regulation does not exist. Yet, institutions provide their international students with a wide range of support and information tailored to the specific needs of the programme or university. International students are treated equally to domestic students, and they can benefit from the same wide range of services and support offered by individual institutions. Offers may vary between institutions.
5. In Australia, not only are providers not required to provide visa assistance, but they are generally forbidden from providing advice on visas to international students - only registered migration agents are permitted to provide advice and support with respect to visas.
6. In Croatia, there are no such requirements at the national level, but in practice each higher education institution has a staff member dealing with international students who does help them with visas and permits and accommodation, ensures peer support for adjustment and, if needed, access to language courses. Academic support and recognition of prior learning (where applicable - not all institutions are providing it) are provided by HEIs to all students by default.

6. Co-operation and co-ordination

The sixth section of the Survey covers recognition agreements and facilitation of co-ordination and consultations nationally and internationally.

Appendix Table A.6. Co-operation and co-ordination

Respondent	Q601. Please indicate the bilateral or multilateral recognition agreements for higher education qualifications to which the jurisdiction is party (other than the UNESCO regional conventions [e.g. Lisbon Recognition Convention] or the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education):	Does government (or other regulatory body with responsibility over higher education) in the jurisdiction facilitate consultation and co-ordination between the various competent bodies for quality assurance and accreditation, regulation and recognition of cross-border higher education...	
		Q602 ...nationally	Q603 ...internationally
AUS	Australia has a mutual recognition agreement with India and a range of bilateral agreements at the professional body to professional body level with a range of countries.	✓	✓

Respondent	Q601. Please indicate the bilateral or multilateral recognition agreements for higher education qualifications to which the jurisdiction is party (other than the UNESCO regional conventions [e.g. Lisbon Recognition Convention] or the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education):	Does government (or other regulatory body with responsibility over higher education) in the jurisdiction facilitate consultation and co-ordination between the various competent bodies for quality assurance and accreditation, regulation and recognition of cross-border higher education...	
		Q602 ...nationally	Q603 ...internationally
AUT	Austria has bilateral recognition agreements on higher education qualifications with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the People's Republic of China (hereafter, "China"), Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Kosovo, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Switzerland, Serbia, Slovenia and Spain.	✓	✓
BEL	The Benelux Union (Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) have two mutual agreements on the automatic recognition of higher education qualifications, the Decision M(2015)3 for the automatic mutual generic level recognition of Bachelor and Master degrees and the Decision M(2018)1 for automatic mutual generic level recognition of Associate and Doctoral degrees. Benelux and Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) launched the Treaty on the automatic mutual recognition of higher education qualifications in 2021, entered into force in 2024.	✓	✓
CAN	Some ministries/departments at the provincial and territorial level responsible for education have signed international bilateral agreements directly with one or more jurisdictions, countries or regions for qualifications recognition, such as bilateral mutual recognition agreements with China in 2005, signed by most provincial governments. Furthermore, to facilitate the mobility of internationally-educated professionals, there are additional instances, including Quebec which has signed agreements on the recognition of professional qualifications with France and Switzerland . Similarly, the Regulatory Organizations of Architecture in Canada (ROAC) and the Architects' Council of Europe (ACE) signed the ACE-ROAC Mutual Recognition Agreement for the Practice of Architecture .	✓ [1]	✓ [1]
CHE	Switzerland has agreements with other countries on the recognition of professional qualifications above all for entry into the Swiss labour market, but the recognition of higher education diplomas/awards for the purpose of continuing studies at higher education institutions is the responsibility of each individual higher education institution in Switzerland. Switzerland has bilateral recognition agreements regarding higher education with Germany, Austria, Italy and France.	✓	n/a
CHL	Ministry of Education oversees bilateral recognition agreements for higher education qualifications with the following countries: Argentina , Spain and the United Kingdom . Ministry of Foreign Affairs executes international agreements for the recognition of academic degrees and qualifications, with the following countries: Uruguay, Brazil, Peru, Bolivia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.	✓	✓
CRI	France (2015)	✓	✓
DEU	Regarding vocational qualifications, bilateral agreements on recognition exist between Germany and Switzerland, Austria and France.	x	x
DNK	Reykjavik Declaration (see Sweden)	✓	✓
EST	Baltic-Benelux Treaty on the automatic mutual recognition of higher education qualifications	✓	✓
FIN	Reykjavik Declaration (see Sweden)	x	x
FRA	France has agreements with Germany (2015), Argentina (2015), Australia (2012), Québec (Canada) (1996), Chile (2015), China (2020), Colombia (2010), Costa Rica (2015), Ecuador (2015), Spain (2008), Ghana (2015), India (2018), Japan (2022), Salvador (2018), Mexico (2014), New Zealand (2013), Panama (2016), Peru (2016), Poland (2009), Portugal (2008), Romania (2012), Russia (2015), Switzerland (2000), Taiwan (2008), Ukraine (2005), Uruguay (2015), The Holy See (2008), Venezuela (1996), Vietnam (2004)	✓	✓
GBR	Mutual recognition agreements with Argentina , Chile , Colombia , India , Mexico , Peru and Switzerland .	✓	✓
HUN	Bilateral agreements with Bulgaria (1976), India (1977), Laos (1984), Syria (1989), Spain (1991), Croatia (1998), China (1998), Austria (1999), Romania (1999), Slovenia (2000), Slovak Republic (2000), Germany (2004), Czechia (2008), Russian Federation (2019), Serbia (2019), Ukraine (2021)	x	x
ITA	Agreements for the mutual recognition of qualifications have been signed with Austria, Germany, Switzerland and Ecuador.	✓	✓

Respondent	Q601. Please indicate the bilateral or multilateral recognition agreements for higher education qualifications to which the jurisdiction is party (other than the UNESCO regional conventions [e.g. Lisbon Recognition Convention] or the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education):	Does government (or other regulatory body with responsibility over higher education) in the jurisdiction facilitate consultation and co-ordination between the various competent bodies for quality assurance and accreditation, regulation and recognition of cross-border higher education...	
		Q602 ...nationally	Q603 ...internationally
JPN	Agreement with France (see France)	✓	✓
NLD	Part of two Benelux agreements and the Baltic-Benelux Treaty (see Belgium)	✓	✓
NZL	The New Zealand Qualifications Authority has recognition arrangements with Australia, China (and Hong Kong separately), European Union, Ireland, Malaysia, Philippines, and United Arab Emirates.	✓	✓
PRT	Portugal has multiple bilateral cooperation agreements where it commits to facilitating the understanding aimed at easing the recognition of foreign degrees and diplomas. A set of general decisions has enabled automatic recognition of qualifications of different countries, as listed by the Commission for the Recognition of Foreign Degrees and Diplomas.	✓	✓
SVK	Bilateral agreements with Czechia (all education), Hungary, Germany, Croatia, Poland, Romania, Ukraine, Russian Federation, China	x	x
SWE	Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden (and the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland) in 2022 revised an earlier Nordic Declaration on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education – the “ Reykjavik Declaration ”	n/a	n/a
BGR (a)	Bulgaria has several bilateral agreements and programs (with countries from different regions) for co-operation in the fields of culture, education, research, sports, arts, etc., referring to national legislation for academic recognition of participating parties.	n/a	n/a
HRV (a)	(see Hungary, Slovak Republic)	n/a	n/a
ROU (a)	Romania has many agreements and/or collaboration programmes concluded with other countries, some include mutual recognition of qualifications.	✓	✓

Note: (a) accession candidate country

1. The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials and the Council of Ministers of Education Canada play a national and international role in this co-ordination.

Appendix B. Collected information

The Appendix B. consist of five tables that summarise information collected from desk research individually for each of 40 Adherents and seven accession candidate countries. See Appendix Table C.1 for country codes. Desk research was based on two approaches.

The first approach involved identifying information available online and, where possible, locating specific websites containing the relevant data. The tables below include web domains with hyperlinks to guide readers to the appropriate sources. Initial desk research drew on data already compiled by ENIC-NARIC, which provides systematic information on the higher education systems of 36 of the covered countries, along with partial data for others. Missing information was supplemented through multilingual Google searches and by querying large language models (primarily ChatGPT) with web search capabilities. All information presented below was reviewed and validated by the Secretariat.

The second approach focused on reviewing membership in international networks and adherence to international conventions. Information was sourced directly from the official websites of the respective organisations.

Appendix Table B.1. Providing adequate information about higher education systems

Relevant bodies provide or support provision of easily accessible information on (Q503-Q508, Q513):

Country	Q501. National information centre	Q503. Domestic higher education institutions and providers	Q504. Domestic study programmes	Q505. Hosting CBHE institutions / providers	Q506. Hosting CBHE programmes	Q507. Sending CBHE institutions / providers	Q508. Sending CBHE programmes	Q513. Study opportunities and advice for international students (e.g. "Study in ..." portal)
AUS	internationaleducation.gov.au	teqsa.gov.au	courseseeker.edu.au	teqsa.gov.au	x	x	x	studyaustralia.gov.au
AUT	bmfwf.gv.at	bmfwf.gv.at	studienwahl.at	aq.ac.at	aq.ac.at	x	x	studyinaustria.at
BEL-FL	vlaanderen.be	highereducation.be	highereducation.be	✓ same as Q503	highereducation.be	highereducation.be	n/a	studyinflanders.be
BEL-FR	enseignement.be	enseignement.be	mesetudes.be	n/a	x	n/a	n/a	studyinbelgium.be
CAN	cicic.ca	cicic.ca	educanada.ca	✓ same as Q503	x	✓ same as Q503	n/a	educanada.ca
CHE	swissuniversities.ch	studyprogrammes.ch	studyprogrammes.ch	x [1]	✓ same as Q504	x [1]	x [1]	studyinswitzerland.plus

Country	Q501. National information centre	Q503. Domestic higher education institutions and providers	Q504. Domestic study programmes	Q505. Hosting CBHE institutions / providers	Q506. Hosting CBHE programmes	Q507. Sending CBHE institutions / providers	Q508. Sending CBHE programmes	Q513. Study opportunities and advice for international students (e.g. "Study in ..." portal)
CHL	mifuturo.cl/sies	mifuturo.cl	mifuturo.cl	n/a	x	x	n/a	learnchile.cl
COL	n/k	mineducacion.gov.co	mineducacion.gov.co	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k
CRI	conare.ac.cr	sinaes.ac.cr	sinaes.ac.cr	x	x	x	x	studyincr.com
CZE	msmt.cz	regvssp.msmt.cz	regvssp.msmt.cz	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	studyin.cz
DEU	kmk.org/zab	hochschulkompass.de	hochschulkompass.de	x	hochschulkompass.de	daad.de	x	study-in-germany.de
DNK	ufm.dk/recognition	ufm.dk	ug.dk/uddannelser	n/a	x	✓ same as Q503	n/a	studyindenmark.dk
ESP	universidades.gob.es	educacion.gob.es	educacion.gob.es	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	studyinspain.info
EST	harno.ee	harno.ee	enda.ehis.ee	n/a	n/a	x	n/a	studyinestonia.ee
FIN	okm.fi	okm.fi okm.fi	opintopolku.fi	x	x	x	x	studyinfinland.fi
FRA	france-education-international.fr	data.gouv.fr	onisep.fr	x	x	data.gouv.fr	x	campusfrance.org
GBR-ENG	enic.org.uk	officeforstudents.org.uk	discoveruni.gov.uk	✓ same as Q503	x	x	x	study-uk.britishcouncil.org
GBR-SCT		gov.scot		x	x	x	x	scotland.org/study
GBR-WLS		gov.uk		x	x	x	x	studyinwales.ac.uk
GBR-NIR		nidirect.gov.uk		n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	study-uk.britishcouncil.org
GRC	doatap.gr	doatap.gr	minedu.gov.gr	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	studyingreece.edu.gr
HUN	oktatas.hu	firgraf.oh.gov.hu	firgraf.oh.gov.hu	firgraf.oh.gov.hu	firgraf.oh.gov.hu	x	firgraf.oh.gov.hu	studyinhungary.hu
IRL	narc.ie	irg.ie	irg.ie	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	educationinireland.com
ISL	enicnarc.is	enicnarc.is	haskoladagurinn.is	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	study.iceland.is
ISR	education.gov.il	che.org.il	che.org.il	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	studyisrael.org.il
ITA	cimea.it	universitaly.it	universitaly.it	universitaly.it	universitaly.it	x	x	studyinitaly.esteri.it uni-italia.it
JPN	nicjp.niad.ac.jp	nicjp.niad.ac.jp	nicjp.niad.ac.jp	mext.go.jp	x	x	x	studyinjapan.go.jp
KOR	karic.kr	karic.kr	academyinfo.go.kr	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	studyinkorea.go.kr
LTU	skvc.lrv.lt	aikos.smm.lt	aikos.smm.lt	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	studyin.lt
LUX	mesr.gouvernement.lu	luxembourg.public.lu	mesr.gouvernement.lu	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	mengstudien.public.lu
LVA	aic.lv	eplatforma.aika.lv	eplatforma.aika.lv	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	studyinlatvia.lv
MEX	n/k	gob.mx/sep	sirvoes.sep.gob.mx	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k
NLD	nuffic.nl	nvaio.net	nvaio.net	✓ same as Q503	✓ same as Q504	✓ same as Q503	✓ same as Q504	studyinnl.org
NOR	hkdir.no	nokut.no	nokut.no	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	studyinnorway.no
NZL	nzqa.govt.nz	nzqa.govt.nz	nzqa.govt.nz	✓ same as Q503	x	nzqa.govt.nz	nzqa.govt.nz	studywithnewzealand.govt.nz
POL	nawa.gov.pl	radon.nauka.gov.pl	radon.nauka.gov.pl	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	study.gov.pl

Country	Q501. National information centre	Q503. Domestic higher education institutions and providers	Q504. Domestic study programmes	Q505. Hosting CBHE institutions / providers	Q506. Hosting CBHE programmes	Q507. Sending CBHE institutions / providers	Q508. Sending CBHE programmes	Q513. Study opportunities and advice for international students (e.g. "Study in ..." portal)
PRT	naricportugal.pt	dges.gov.pt	dges.gov.pt	n/a	x	x	n/a	study-research.pt
SVK	uznavanie.minedu.sk	minedu.sk	portalvs.sk	minedu.sk	x	x	x	studyinslovakia.saia.sk
SVN	gov.si	gov.si	gov.si	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	studyinslovenia.si
SWE	uhr.se	uka.se	universityadmissions.se	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	studyinsweden.se
TUR	denklik.yok.gov.tr	yok.gov.tr	yokatlas.yok.gov.tr	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	studyinturkiye.gov.tr
USA	sites.ed.gov	ope.ed.gov/dapip	ope.ed.gov/dapip	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	educationusa.state.gov
BRA	n/k	emec.mec.gov.br	emec.mec.gov.br	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	gov.br/mre
KAZ	enic-kazakhstan.edu.kz	enic-kazakhstan.edu.kz	enic-kazakhstan.edu.kz	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	studyinkazakhstan.edu.kz
ARG (a)	n/k	guiadecarreras.siu.edu.ar	guiadecarreras.siu.edu.ar	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k
BGR (a)	nacid.bg	rvu.nacid.bg	rvu.nacid.bg	n/a	x	x	x	mfa.bg/en/155
HRV (a)	azvo.hr	croris.hr	hko.srce.hr	✓ same as Q503	x	n/a	x	studyincroatia.hr
IDN (a)	n/k	kemdiktisaintek.go.id	banpt.or.id	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	studyinindonesia.kemdikbud.go.id
PER (a)	n/k	tuni.pe	tuni.pe	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k
ROU (a)	cnred.edu.ro	edu.ro	edu.ro aracis.ro	✓ same as Q504	✓ same as Q504	✓ same as Q504	✓ same as Q504	studyinromania.gov.ro
THA (a)	n/k	info.mhesi.go.th	checo.mhesi.go.th	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	gostudythailand.org

Notes: Rows in white are validated by survey response. Each website was reviewed by the Secretariat. Review of all covered countries done for Q501, Q503, Q504 and Q513. Items Q505 – Q508 are based only on survey responses, countries that have not responded were not reviewed. Hyperlinks provided are valid as of 4 August 2025, shown are only domain names and subdirectories where relevant.

(a) accession candidate country

1. In Switzerland, for hosted IBC, it operates as a private organisation and is not accredited or recognised under Higher Education Act at federal level. Information portal only cover education offered in Switzerland.

Appendix Table B.2. Information about joint or dual/multiple degree programmes

Review of portals with the list of domestic study programmes (Q504) and available filters for joint or dual/multiple degree programmes

Country	Portal	Filter
AUT	studienwahl.at	joint / double degree
BEL-FL	highereducation.be	international education

DEU	hochschulkompass.de	International double diploma
LTU	aikos.smm.lt	Joint programme
LVA	eplatforma.aika.lv	Joint study programmes [1]
NLD	nvao.net nvao.net nvao.net	HBO Master joint degree WO Bachelor joint degree WO Master joint degree [1]
POL	radon.nauka.gov.pl	Joint study programme
SVN	nakvis.si	Joint programmes [1]
HRV (a)	hko.srce.hr	Joint programme [1]

Notes: Table only includes countries with available filters, all 48 portals referenced in Appendix Table A.1 – Q504 were reviewed. Hyperlinks provided are valid as of 4 August 2025, shown are only domain names and subdirectories where relevant.

1. Results include any joint programme offered by two or more institutions within the country or across borders.
- (a) accession candidate country

Another portal that has information is the Database of External Quality Assurance Results, provided by the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education, which has a [list of programmes](#) evaluated or accredit according to the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes.

Appendix Table B.3. System of external quality assurance

Country	System of external quality assurance	QA body	Relevant bodies provide or support provision of easily accessible information on:		Membership in international networks of quality assurance bodies			
			Q509. criteria and procedures for quality assurance	Q510. results of external quality assurance assessments	INQAAHE	ENQA	APQN	SIACES
AUS	✓	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency	teqsa.gov.au	teqsa.gov.au	✓	n/a	✓	n/a
AUT	✓	Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation	aq.ac.at	aq.ac.at	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
BEL-FL	✓	Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders [shared with NLD]	nvao.net	nvao.net	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
BEL-FR	subnational	Agency for Higher Education Quality Evaluation	aeqes.be	aeqes.be	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
CAN-AB	✓ subnational [1]	Campus Alberta Quality Council	caqc.alberta.ca	caqc.alberta.ca	✗	n/a	n/a	n/a
CAN-BC		Degree Quality Assessment Board	gov.bc.ca	gov.bc.ca	✗	n/a	n/a	n/a
CAN-ON		Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance	oucqa.ca	oucqa.ca	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a
CAN-QC		Office of Interuniversity Cooperation	bci-qc.ca	n/k	✗	n/a	n/a	n/a
CHE	✓	Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance	aaq.ch	aaq.ch	✓	✓	n/a	n/a

Country	System of external quality assurance	QA body	Relevant bodies provide or support provision of easily accessible information on:		Membership in international networks of quality assurance bodies			
			Q509. criteria and procedures for quality assurance	Q510. results of external quality assurance assessments	<u>INQAAHE</u>	<u>ENQA</u>	<u>APQN</u>	<u>SIACES</u>
CHL	✓	National Accreditation Commission	cnachile.cl	acreditacion.cl	✓	n/a	n/a	✓
COL	✓	National Accreditation Council	cna.gov.co	cna.gov.co	✓	n/a	n/a	✓
CRI	✓	National Higher Education Accreditation System	conesup.mep.go.cr	sinaes.ac.cr	✓	n/a	n/a	✓
CZE	✓	National Accreditation Bureau for Tertiary Education	navvs.cz	navvs.cz	✓	A	n/a	n/a
DEU	✓	German Accreditation Council	akkreditierungsrat.de	akkreditierungsrat.de	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
DNK	✓	The Danish Accreditation Institution	akkr.dk	akkrediteringsraadet.dk	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
ESP	✓	National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation	aneca.es	aneca.es	✓	✓	n/a	✓
EST	✓	Estonian Quality Agency for Education	haka.ee	haka.ee	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
FIN	✓	Finnish Education Evaluation Centre	karvi.fi	karvi.fi	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
FRA	✓	High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education	hceres.fr	hceres.fr	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
GBR-ENG	subnational	The Office for Students	officeforstudents.org.uk	officeforstudents.org.uk	✓	A	n/a	n/a
GBR-SCT		The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education	qaa.ac.uk	qaa.ac.uk	✓	✓	O	n/a
GBR-WLS								
GBR-NIR								
GRC	✓	Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency	ethaae.gr	ethaae.gr	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
HUN	✓	Hungarian Accreditation Committee	mab.hu	mab.hu	x	✓	n/a	n/a
IRL	✓	Quality and Qualifications Ireland	qqi.ie	qqi.ie	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
ISL	✓	Quality Board for Icelandic Higher Education	iaqa.is	stjornarradid.is	x	A	n/a	n/a
ISR	✓	Council for Higher Education	che.org.il	che.org.il	✓	A	n/a	n/a
ITA	✓	National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes	anvur.it	anvur.it	x	✓	n/a	n/a
JPN	✓	Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Organization	mext.go.jp	mext.go.jp	✓	n/a	✓	n/a
KOR	✓	Korean Council for University Education	aims.kcue.or.kr	aims.kcue.or.kr	✓	n/a	✓	n/a
LTU	✓	Center for Quality Assessment in Higher Education	skvc.lt	skvc.lt	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
LUX	✓ [2]	Ministry of Higher Education and Research [2]	mesr.gouvernement.lu	mesr.gouvernement.lu	x	A	n/a	n/a
LVA	✓	Academic Information Centre – the Quality Agency for Higher Education	aika.lv	eplatforma.aika.lv	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
MEX	✓	Inter Institutional Committees for the Evaluation of Higher Education	ciees.edu.mx	ciees.edu.mx	✓	n/a	n/a	✓
NLD	✓	Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders	nvaio.net	nvaio.net	✓	✓	n/a	n/a

Country	System of external quality assurance	QA body	Relevant bodies provide or support provision of easily accessible information on:		Membership in international networks of quality assurance bodies			
			Q509. criteria and procedures for quality assurance	Q510. results of external quality assurance assessments	<u>INQAAHE</u>	<u>ENQA</u>	<u>APQN</u>	<u>SIACES</u>
NOR	✓	Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education	nokut.no	nokut.no	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
NZL	✓	Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities	nzqa.govt.nz	nzqa.govt.nz	✓	n/a	✓	n/a
POL	✓	The Polish Accreditation Committee	pka.edu.pl	pka.edu.pl	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
PRT	✓	Agency for Evaluation and Accreditation of Higher Education	a3es.pt	a3es.pt	x	✓	n/a	✓
SVK	✓	Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education	saavs.sk	saavs.sk	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
SVN	✓	Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency	nakvis.si	nakvis.si	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
SWE	✓	Swedish Higher Education Authority	uka.se	uka.se	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
TUR	✓	Turkish Higher Education Quality Council	yokak.gov.tr	yokak.gov.tr	✓	✓	✓	n/a
USA [3]	✓ subnational	Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges	accjc.org	accjc.org	x	n/a	n/a	n/a
		Higher Learning Commission	hlcommission.org	hlcommission.org	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a
		Middle States Commission on Higher Education	msche.org	msche.org	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a
		New England Commission of Higher Education	neche.org	neche.org	x	n/a	n/a	n/a
		Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities	nwccu.org	nwccu.org	x	n/a	n/a	n/a
		Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges	sacscoc.org	sacscoc.org	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a
BRA	✓	WASC Senior College and University Commission	wscuc.org	wscuc.org	x	n/a	n/a	n/a
BRA	✓	National Institute of Educational Studies and Research	gov.br/inep	emec.mec.gov.br	x	n/a	n/a	✓
KAZ [4]	✓	Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating	iaar.agency	iaar.agency	✓	✓	✓	n/a
ARG (a)	✓	National Commission for University Evaluation and Accreditation	coneau.gob.ar	coneau.gob.ar	x	n/a	n/a	✓
BGR (a)	✓	National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency	neaa.government.bg	neaa.government.bg	x	✓	n/a	n/a
HRV (a)	✓	Agency for Science and Higher Education	azvo.hr	azvo.hr	✓	✓	0	n/a
IDN (a)	✓	National Accreditation Board for Higher Education	banpt.or.id	banpt.or.id	✓	n/a	✓	n/a
PER (a)	✓	National System for Evaluation, Accreditation and Certification of Educational Quality	gob.pe/institucion/sineace	sineace.gob.pe	✓	n/a	n/a	✓
ROU (a)	✓	The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education	aracis.ro	aracis.ro	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
THA (a)	✓	The Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment	onesqa.or.th	onesqa.or.th	✓	n/a	✓	n/a

Notes: Some covered countries have multiple quality assurance bodies, in that case body or bodies with majority responsibility were reviewed. For Q509 and Q510, each website was reviewed by the Secretariat. Hyperlinks provided are valid as of 4 August 2025, shown are only domain names and subdirectories where relevant.

INQAAHE International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

ENQA European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

APQN Asia-Pacific Quality Network

SIACES Ibero-American Quality Assurance System of Higher Education

(a) accession candidate country

A affiliate member

O observer

1. Canada, four provinces with the greatest share of enrolled students were selected for the desk research (together account for 89% of all enrolled students in Canada). In the four selected provinces, the desk research focused on QA bodies overseeing universities.
2. Ministry of Higher Education and Research in Luxembourg designates a foreign quality assurance body registered in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education to evaluate the study programmes, the decision about accreditation is then made by the Minister.
3. United States, for the desk research, seven regional accrediting bodies for higher education recognised by the [United States Department of Education](#) were selected.
4. Kazakhstan has multiple independent and internationally recognised quality assurance bodies. Based on available data, Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating, which was reviewed for this desk research has accredited most of the study programmes currently offered in Kazakhstan (about 39%).

Source: Information about the existence of an external quality assurance system was derived from UNESCO IESALC (UNESCO IESALC, 2023^[65]) Higher Education Policy Observatory, <https://hepo.iesalc.unesco.org/pc/policy/mapshow/cp/> (accessed on 12 June 2025). The observatory does not cover GRC, HUN, ISR, LVA, LUX, USA and ROU, where existence of an external quality assurance system was validated through desk research.

Appendix Table B.4. Recognition of qualifications

Country	State party to convention on recognition of higher education qualifications				Relevant bodies provide or support provision of easily accessible information on: Q511. criteria and procedures for assessment and recognition of qualifications from abroad and/or from cross-border provision
	Lisbon Recognition Convention Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region	Tokyo Convention Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education	Buenos Aires Convention Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean	Global Convention Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education	
AUS	✓	✓	n/a	✓	internationaleducation.gov.au
AUT	✓	n/a	n/a	x	bmfwf.gv.at
BEL-FL	✓	n/a	n/a	[2]	vlaanderen.be
BEL-FR					equisup.cfwb.be/equivalence
CAN	✓	n/a	n/a	x	cicic.ca
CHE	✓	n/a	n/a	x	sbfi.admin.ch
CHL	n/a	n/a	x	x	uchile.cl
COL	n/a	n/a	x	x	mineducacion.gov.co
CRI	n/a	n/a	x	x	ore.conare.ac.cr
CZE	✓	n/a	n/a	x	msmt.gov.cz
DEU	✓	n/a	n/a	x	kmk.org/zab
DNK	✓	n/a	n/a	x	ufm.dk/recognition
ESP	✓	n/a	n/a	x	aneca.es
EST	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	harno.ee
FIN	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	oph.fi
FRA	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	france-education-international.fr
GBR	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	enic.org.uk
GRC	✓	n/a	n/a	x	doatap.gr
HUN	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	oktatas.hu
IRL	✓	n/a	n/a	x	gqi.ie
ISL	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	english.enicnarc.is
ISR	✓	n/a	n/a	x	gov.il
ITA	✓	n/a	n/a	x	cimea.it
JPN	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	nicjp.niad.ac.jp
KOR	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	karic.kr
LTU	✓	n/a	n/a	x	skvc.lt

Country	State party to convention on recognition of higher education qualifications				Relevant bodies provide or support provision of easily accessible information on: Q511. criteria and procedures for assessment and recognition of qualifications from abroad and/or from cross-border provision
	Lisbon Recognition Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region	Tokyo Convention Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education	Buenos Aires Convention Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean	Global Convention Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education	
LUX	✓	n/a	n/a	x	mesr.gouvernement.lu
LVA	✓	n/a	n/a	x	aic.lv/arvalstu-diplomu-atzisana
MEX	n/a	n/a	x	x	dgair.sep.gob.mx
NLD	✓	n/a	n/a	x	idw.nl
NOR	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	hkdir.no/en/foreign-education
NZL	✓	✓	n/a	✓	nzqa.govt.nz/international
POL	✓	n/a	n/a	x	nawa.gov.pl
PRT	✓	n/a	n/a	x	dges.gov.pt
SVK	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	uznavanie.minedu.sk
SVN	✓	n/a	n/a	x	gov.si
SWE	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	uhr.se
TUR	✓	✓	n/a	x	denklik.yok.gov.tr
USA	x [1]	n/a	n/a	x	sites.ed.gov/international
BRA	n/a	n/a	x	x	gov.br/mec
KAZ	✓	n/a	n/a	x	enic-kazakhstan.edu.kz
ARG (a)	n/a	n/a	x	x	argentina.gob.ar
BGR (a)	✓	n/a	n/a	x	nacid.bg
HRV (a)	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	azvo.hr
IDN (a)	n/a	x	n/a	x	studyinindonesia.kemdikbud.go.id
PER (a)	n/a	n/a	✓	x	gob.pe
ROU (a)	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	cnred.edu.ro
THA (a)	n/a	x	n/a	x	dqe.mhesi.go.th

Notes: State parties as they were listed on 16 June 2025 on respective webpages for each convention. Marked as no (x) if the convention was not ratified by the country located within the region, as [defined](#) by UNESCO. For data in Q511, each website was reviewed by the Secretariat. Hyperlinks provided are valid as of 4 August 2025, shown are only domain names and subdirectories where relevant.

1. United States have signed the Lisbon Recognition Convention in 1999 but never ratified it.
 2. The three communities of Belgium have already ratified the Global Convention, but it has yet to be ratified by the federal government.
- (a) accession candidate country

Appendix Table B.5. National and international networks of higher education institutions and recognition bodies

Country	National sector organisation	Membership in international networks of higher education institutions / providers collective, i.e. national sector association or individual institutions					Membership of national information centres in international networks to facilitate recognition of qualifications		
		International Association of Universities (IAU)	European University Association (EUA)	European Association for the Applied Sciences in Higher Education (EURASHE)	Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE)	Union of Universities of Latin America and the Caribbean (UDUALC)	ENIC-NARIC Networks	Asia-Pacific Network of National Information Centres (APNNIC)	Regional Network of National Information Centres for Latin America and the Caribbean (CINALC)
AUS	universitiesaustralia.edu.au	individual (10)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	n/a
AUT	uniko.ac.at roeph.at oepuk.ac.at fhk.ac.at	individual (5)	collective	individual (5)	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
BEL-FL	vlir.be vlaamsehogescholenraad.be	individual (1)	collective	collective	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
BEL-FR	ares-ac.be cref.be	individual (4)	collective	collective	n/a	n/a			
CAN	univcan.ca collegesinstitutes.ca polytechnicscanada.ca u15.ca	collective	n/a	n/a	individual (44)	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
CHE	swissuniversities.ch	individual (7)	collective	individual (2)	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
CHL	consejodirectores.cl cupchile.cl	individual (1)	n/a	n/a	individual (23)	individual (2)	n/a	n/a	x
COL	ascun.org.co aciet.org.co	individual (4)	n/a	n/a	individual (47)	collective	n/a	n/a	x
CRI	conare.ac.cr	individual (1)	n/a	n/a	individual (9)	individual (6)	n/a	n/a	x
CZE	crc.muni.cz ssvs.cz	individual (3)	collective	collective	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
DEU	hrk.de private-hochschulen.net	individual (11)	collective	individual (2)	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
DNK	dkuni.dk danskeprofessionshøjskoler.dk	individual (2)	collective	x	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
ESP	crue.org aeen.org	collective	collective	individual (3)	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
EST	ern.ee rkm.ee	x	collective	collective	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
FIN	unifi.fi arene.fi	individual (6)	collective	individual (3)	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
FRA	franceuniversites.fr iut.fr ugei.fr	individual (5)	collective	collective	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
GBR-ENG	universitiesuk.ac.uk	individual (3)	collective	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
GBR-SCT	universities-scotland.ac.uk	x							
GBR-WLS	unswales.ac.uk	individual (1)							
GBR-NIR	universitiesuk.ac.uk	x							
GRC	synodos-aei.gr	individual (3)	collective	individual (2)	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
HUN	mrk.hu	collective	collective	collective	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
IRL	iua.ie heca.ie	individual (7)	collective	collective	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a

Country	National sector organisation	Membership in international networks of higher education institutions / providers collective, i.e. national sector association or individual institutions					Membership of national information centres in international networks to facilitate recognition of qualifications		
		International Association of Universities (IAU)	European University Association (EUA)	European Association for the Applied Sciences in Higher Education (EURASHE)	Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE)	Union of Universities of Latin America and the Caribbean (UDUALC)	ENIC-NARIC Networks	Asia-Pacific Network of National Information Centres (APNNIC)	Regional Network of National Information Centres for Latin America and the Caribbean (CINALC)
ISL	english.hi.is	individual (1)	collective	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
ISR	vera.org.il	x	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
ITA	cui.it	individual (16)	collective	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
JPN	janu.jp shidairen.or.jp shidaikyo.or.jp kodaikyo.org	collective	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a
KOR	kcue.or.kr	individual (1)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a
LTU	lurk.lt kolegijos.lt	individual (3)	collective	collective	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
LUX	n/a	x	individual (1)	individual (1)	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
LVA	rekturupadome.lv	x	collective	individual (4)	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
MEX	anuies.mx	individual (17)	n/a	n/a	individual (61)	collective	n/a	n/a	x
NLD	universiteitenvannederland.nl vh.nl	collective	collective	individual (5)	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
NOR	uhr.no	individual (5)	collective	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
NZL	universitiesnz.ac.nz	x	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	n/a
POL	krasp.org.pl krepsz.pl kraun.edu.pl	individual (4)	collective	individual (2)	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
PRT	crup.pt ccisp.pt apesp.pt	individual (6)	collective	collective	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
SVK	srk.sk	x	collective	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
SVN	rks.si skupnost-vss.si skupnost-svz.si	individual (1)	collective	collective	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
SWE	suhf.se	collective	collective	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
TUR	n/k	individual (15)	collective	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	n/a
USA	acenet.edu	collective	n/a	n/a	individual (13)	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
BRA	crub.org.br anup.org.br	individual (4)	n/a	n/a	individual (35)	collective	n/a	n/a	x
KAZ	n/k	individual (3)	individual (1)	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	x	n/a
ARG (a)	cin.edu.ar crup.org.ar	individual (2)	n/a	n/a	individual (32)	collective	n/a	n/a	x
BGR (a)	n/k	individual (1)	individual (8)	individual (2)	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
HRV (a)	rektorski-zbor.hr zbor-veleucilista.hr	individual (3)	collective	collective	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
IDN (a)	n/k	individual (2)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	x	n/a

Country	National sector organisation	Membership in international networks of higher education institutions / providers <i>collective, i.e. national sector association or individual institutions</i>					Membership of national information centres in international networks to facilitate recognition of qualifications		
		International Association of Universities (IAU)	European University Association (EUA)	European Association for the Applied Sciences in Higher Education (EURASHE)	Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE)	Union of Universities of Latin America and the Caribbean (UDUALC)	ENIC-NARIC Networks	Asia-Pacific Network of National Information Centres (APNNIC)	Regional Network of National Information Centres for Latin America and the Caribbean (CINALC)
PER (a)	rpu.edu.pe	individual (2)	n/a	n/a	individual (14)	collective	n/a	n/a	✓
ROU (a)	cnr-romania.ro	collective	collective	individual (3)	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a
THA (a)	n/k	individual (5)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	x	n/a

Notes: Membership as they were listed on 16 June 2025 on respective webpages for each network. For IAU, EUA, EURASHE and IOHE considering only full membership. Marked as no (x) if the covered country has no membership in an organisation covering their region, as [defined](#) by UNESCO. Hyperlinks provided are valid as of 4 August 2025, shown are only domain names and subdirectories where relevant. ENIC-NARIC is the European Network of National Information Centres on Academic Mobility and Recognition, and European Union's Network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres

(a) accession candidate country

Appendix C. Country codes

Appendix Table C.1. List of country codes

	Code	Country (subnational division)
OECD Member country	AUS	Australia
	AUT	Austria
	BEL (FL FR) [1]	Belgium (Flemish Community French Community)
	CAN (AB BC ON QC) [2]	Canada (Alberta British Columbia Ontario Quebec)
	CHE	Switzerland
	CHL	Chile
	COL	Colombia
	CRI	Costa Rica
	CZE	Czechia
	DEU	Germany
	DNK	Denmark
	ESP	Spain
	EST	Estonia
	FIN	Finland
	FRA	France
	GBR (ENG SCT WLS NIR)	United Kingdom (England Scotland Wales Northern Ireland)
	GRC	Greece
	HUN	Hungary
	IRL	Ireland
	ISL	Iceland
	ISR	Israel
	ITA	Italy
	JPN	Japan
	KOR	Korea
	LTU	Lithuania
	LUX	Luxembourg
	LVA	Latvia
	MEX	Mexico
	NLD	Netherlands
	NOR	Norway
	NZL	New Zealand
	POL	Poland
	PRT	Portugal
SVK	Slovak Republic	
SVN	Slovenia	
SWE	Sweden	
TUR	Türkiye	
USA	United States of America	
Non-Member Adherent	BRA	Brazil
	KAZ	Kazakhstan
	ARG	Argentina
	BGR	Bulgaria

Accession candidate country	HRV	Croatia
	IDN	Indonesia
	PER	Peru
	ROU	Romania
	THA	Thailand

Notes:

1. Education in Belgium is governed autonomously by three communities. Report primarily covers two, Flemish and French, as the German-speaking Community has a very limited scale of higher education and did not respond to the Survey.
2. In Canada, education is governed by provinces and territories. For the purposes of this report, where information was not available for the whole country, report focused on four provinces with the largest share of higher education enrolment.

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