

The Director-General

Ref: CL/4553

Subject: **Sixth statutory consultation on the implementation of the Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education (1993)**

Dear Minister,

Under Article VIII of UNESCO's Constitution, Member States are required to submit, every four years, a report on the measures they have taken to implement the conventions and recommendations adopted by the Organization.

In this context, I invite Member States to submit their report on the Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education (1993), in English or French, no later than **15 November 2026**, by completing the questionnaire accessible online from the new website of the "one-stop-shop" for the monitoring and assessment of the implementation of standard-setting instruments at the following address:

<https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/monitoring>

Member States are encouraged to organize all necessary consultations with relevant ministries and institutions as well as with key stakeholders, including professional associations, civil society partners and National Commissions for UNESCO.

In addition, Member States are requested to designate a national focal point responsible for information sharing and cooperation with UNESCO regarding reports on the 1993 Recommendation. Member States should inform the Secretariat of this designation by **30 July 2026** at the latest (glocohed@unesco.org).

Practical information on submitting the report is provided in the attached Guidelines for the Preparation of Reports by Member States on the Implementation of the 1993 Recommendation.

The Secretariat will submit to the 227th session of the Executive Board, in the autumn 2027, the sixth consolidated report on the implementation by Member States of the 1993 Recommendation for its consideration. This report, together with the comments of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations, will subsequently be submitted to the 44th session of the General Conference in 2027. In line with the decision of the Executive Board, individual country reports will be made publicly available on the new website of the "one-stop-shop".

The Education Sector remains at your disposal for any further information you may require.

Please accept, dear Minister, the assurances of my highest consideration.


Khaled El-Enany

To Ministers responsible for relations with UNESCO



Encl.: Guidelines for the Preparation of Reports by Member States on the
Implementation of the Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies
and Qualifications in Higher Education (1993)

Cc: Permanent Delegations to UNESCO
National Commissions for UNESCO
UNESCO Field Offices
UNESCO Institutes for Education

ANNEX

GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF REPORTS BY MEMBER STATES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF STUDIES AND QUALIFICATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION (1993)

I. Introduction

A. About the 1993 Recommendation

1. The Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education (1993) was adopted by UNESCO's General Conference at its 27th session in 1993. It provides a normative framework for promoting inter-regional cooperation on the recognition of studies and qualifications in higher education by detailing guiding principles and formulating a global approach.
2. This instrument calls for common principles for the recognition of studies and qualifications in higher education by all competent authorities and institutions. It contains provisions for establishing mechanisms and procedures to ensure the quality and standards of degrees. The 1993 Recommendation further provides for action by, and cooperation among, various higher education stakeholders and highlights the need for bilateral and multilateral cooperation among governmental bodies and higher education institutions. Moreover, it recalls the responsibility of Member States to provide education as a human right and calls for knowledge and learning to be accessible to all.
3. The full text of the 1993 Recommendation is available at: <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/recommendation-recognition-studies-and-qualifications-higher-education>.

B. Reporting obligations

4. Under Article VIII of UNESCO's Constitution, Member States are required to submit a report on the legislative and administrative provisions and any other measures they have taken to implement the conventions and recommendations adopted by the General Conference. Member States should thus provide information on the legislative measures they have taken pursuant to the 1993 Recommendation and the ways in which national policies and practices correspond to its provisions. Information provided by Member States should demonstrate how laws and policies comply with the commitments under the 1993 Recommendation, describing norms as well as actual implementation.

II. Guidelines for reporting

5. The reporting period for the 6th Consultation on the implementation of the 1993 Recommendation covers the four-year period from 2024 to 2027.
6. The guidelines have been developed to support Member States with their reporting on the implementation of the 1993 Recommendation. They consist of 14 questions, largely with multiple choice responses but some also open-ended. The guidelines have four parts:
 - Part I aims to assess the extent to which the objectives and principles of the 1993 Recommendation are reflected and implemented in national legislation, policies, and practices, as well as to gather information on challenges faced.
 - Part II aims to collect data on where Member States stand regarding the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education (2019) and the regional recognition conventions.
 - Part III focuses on information provision and quality assurance.
 - Part IV focuses on international mobility and cooperation.

In the preparation of reports, Member States are kindly requested to provide brief and concise responses, although they may provide details on the scope of the question if deemed necessary.

7. Only one questionnaire may be submitted per country. Prior to completing the questionnaire, Member States are encouraged to organize the necessary consultations within and outside the Ministry in charge of higher education, including with national academic networks of information centres, quality assurance agencies and civil society partners, to collect the necessary data.

8. The guidelines will be made available online through a dedicated platform.

III. Submission and dissemination of reports

9. Please designate a national focal point responsible for information sharing and cooperation with UNESCO in relation to reporting on this Recommendation.

10. Member States are encouraged to submit the questionnaire (in English or French) in one of the following ways:

- (i) Online (preferred): the consolidated questionnaire (one per Member State) can be completed and submitted online through a link to be found at:

Link:

<https://unes.co/6thr1993>

QR Code:



Upon receipt of the designation of the national focal point, the Education Sector will transmit the token, specific to each Member State, allowing the completion and submission of this questionnaire directly online.

- (ii) Email: the questionnaire can be completed electronically and sent to: glocohed@unesco.org. The responses to the questionnaire, if sent by email, should respect the limit of maximum characters of each question and must be submitted in electronic form only (standard .doc, .pdf or .rtf format).

11. The reports will be made available on UNESCO's website in order to facilitate the exchange of information relating to the promotion and implementation of this Recommendation

IV. Country information

1. Country:

2. Name and title of the person completing the report:

3. Institution/Department:

4. Email address:

5. Telephone or WhatsApp number:

V. Guidelines

Part I – Legislation, regulations and policies

1. Please indicate which entities are considered competent recognition authorities in your country. (UNESCO considers a competent recognition authority to be an entity which, in accordance with the laws, regulations, policies, or practices of a State Party, assesses qualifications and/or makes decisions on the recognition of qualifications.)

- ☐ Ministry responsible for Higher Education
- ☐ Other government Ministry
- ☐ National academic information centre
- ☐ Quality assurance agency
- ☐ Higher Education institutions
- ☐ Other

Please provide any additional explanation deemed necessary, including weblinks to legislation, regulations or policies where appropriate (300 words max)

2. Which of the following principles and practices set out in the 1993 Recommendation are explicitly addressed in your country's legislation, regulations or policy? (*Please select all that apply*)

Principles to apply:

- ☐ Fair recognition procedures
- ☐ Non-discrimination (recognition not based on nationality or legal status)
- ☐ Consideration of great diversity of higher education systems and modes of education existing in the world, including non-traditional forms of education

Procedures for:

- ☐ Recognition of secondary education qualifications for higher education admission
- ☐ Recognition of higher education qualifications for further studies
- ☐ Recognition of partial studies (any part of a higher-education programme which has been evaluated and authenticated, and while not a complete programme in itself, can be equated with a significant acquisition of knowledge or skill)
- ☐ Recognition of skills and qualifications with a view to the practice of a profession
- ☐ Recognition of the qualifications of refugees and displaced persons who cannot provide documentary evidence of these
- ☐ Recognition of qualifications obtained from an institution operating outside of the territory of the state under whose authority it falls

Please provide any additional explanation deemed necessary. (300 words max)

--

3. For what reasons might a competent recognition authority in your country refuse to recognize a foreign qualification? *(Please select all that apply)*

- ☐ Awarding institution or programme is not accredited / not quality assured
- ☐ Awarding institution or programme is not sufficiently known
- ☐ Reputation of the awarding institution or programme
- ☐ Admissions requirements of the awarding institution or programme
- ☐ Qualifications of teaching personnel of the awarding institution or programme

- ☐ Duration of study or level of learner workload
- ☐ Rigor of final assessment (e.g. exams, thesis)
- ☐ Online studies as learning modality
- ☐ Part-time nature of studies

- ☐ Lack of comparable program or qualification in your country
- ☐ Mismatch in level in qualifications framework

- ☐ Significant differences that would most likely prevent the applicant from succeeding in a desired activity, whether that be further study, research activities, or employment opportunities

- ☐ Other

Please provide any additional explanation deemed necessary. *(300 words max)*

4. Has there been any relevant legislative or regulatory changes in the last 4 years regarding qualifications recognition procedures?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, please provide available additional information, including weblinks to legislation, regulations or policies where appropriate. *(300 words max)*

5. What are the main challenges, if any, faced by your national authorities in implementing the provisions of the 1993 Recommendation? *(300 words max)*

6. Please enter any additional information on your country's implementation of the 1993 Recommendation that you would like to report on? *(300 words max)*

Part II – UNESCO Recognition Conventions

7. At which stage of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession is your government with regard to the 2019 Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education?

- ☐ Already a State Party
- ☐ The instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession is on its way to UNESCO
- ☐ Domestic procedures completed
- ☐ Domestic procedures well-advanced
- ☐ Domestic procedures started
- ☐ Process not initiated, but interested to join
- ☐ Not interested to join
- ☐ Other

Please provide any additional explanation deemed necessary. (300 words max)

8. At which stage of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession is your government concerning the second-generation regional recognition convention or conventions relevant for you?

Please indicate which regional convention(s) you are reporting on:

- ☐ Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (1997)
- ☐ Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (2011)
- ☐ Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States (2014)
- ☐ Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (2019)
- ☐ Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in the Arab States (2022)

Please indicate stage of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession:

- ☐ Already a State Party to one or more second-generation regional convention
- ☐ The instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession is on its way to UNESCO
- ☐ Domestic procedures completed
- ☐ Domestic procedures well-advanced
- ☐ Domestic procedures started
- ☐ Process not started, but interested to join
- ☐ Not interested to join
- ☐ Other

Please provide any additional explanation deemed necessary. (300 words max)

9. Please specify any support needed for your country to ratify or implement the Global and regional recognition conventions. (300 words max)

Part III – Information provision and quality assurance

10. What information pertinent to the recognition of qualifications does your country publicly provide? (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Description of your country's education system
- ☐ Description of your country's higher education system
- ☐ Overview of the different types of higher education institutions and their typical characteristics
- ☐ An explanation of higher education quality assurance processes in your country
- ☐ Information on your country's National Qualifications Framework

- ☐ List of your country's recognized higher education institutions, their awarding powers and entry requirements
- ☐ List of higher education institutions that are considered part of your country's education system that are operating or located outside your territory
- ☐ List of higher education institutions that are considered part of another country's education system that are operating inside your territory

- ☐ Information for individuals on how to have their foreign qualifications assessed

Please provide relevant weblinks and any additional explanation deemed necessary. (300 words max)

11. Please briefly describe the mechanisms that have been established in your country, such as evaluation and accrediting bodies for the purpose of assuring the quality of higher education studies? (300 words max)

12. Are these quality assurance bodies encouraged to cooperate internationally with other similar bodies?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

If yes, please provide available additional information, including weblinks to legislation, regulations or policies where appropriate. (300 words max)

Part IV – International mobility and cooperation

13. Does your country currently have higher education policies related to international student mobility?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, please provide available additional information, including weblinks to legislation, regulations or policies where appropriate. (300 words max)

14. In which areas connected to the recognition of studies and qualifications in higher education would you like to see increased international cooperation? (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Automatic recognition
☐ Student mobility and exchange
☐ Recognition of qualifications obtained through non-traditional modes, including distance/online modes
☐ Recognition of partial studies (including micro-credentials)
☐ Recognition of qualifications with a view towards the practice of a profession
☐ Standard and guidelines for quality assurance
☐ Qualifications frameworks
☐ Recognition of qualifications for refugees and displaced persons
☐ Use of technology in recognition
☐ Combatting fraud
☐ Other

Please briefly indicate what measures, if any, your country has undertaken towards these ends. (300 words max)