

**CONVENTION ON THE RECOGNITION OF
STUDIES, DIPLOMAS AND DEGREES CONCERNING
HIGHER EDUCATION
IN THE STATES BELONGING TO THE
EUROPE REGION**

PREAMBLE

The States of the Europe Region, Parties to this Convention,

Recalling that, as the General Conference of Unesco has noted on several occasions in its resolutions concerning European co-operation, "the development of co-operation between nations in the fields of education, science, culture and communication, in accordance with the principles set out in Unesco's Constitution, plays an essential role in the promotion of peace and international understanding",

Conscious of the close relationship that exists between their cultures, despite their diversity of languages and the differences in economic and social systems, and desiring to strengthen their co-operation in the field of education and training in the interests of the well-being and lasting prosperity of their peoples,

Recalling that the States meeting in Helsinki expressed, in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (1 August 1975), their intention "to improve access, under mutually acceptable conditions, for students, teachers and scholars of the participating States to each other's educational, cultural and scientific institutions ... in particular by ... arriving at the mutual recognition of academic degrees and diplomas either through governmental agreements, where necessary, or direct arrangements between universities and other institutions of higher learning and research", and also by "promoting a more exact assessment of the problems of comparison and equivalence of academic degrees and diplomas",

Recalling that, with a view to promoting the attainment of these objectives, most of the Contracting States have already concluded bilateral or subregional agreements among themselves concerning the equivalence or recognition of diplomas; but desiring, while pursuing and intensifying their efforts at the bilateral and subregional levels, to extend their co-operation in this field to the whole Europe Region,

Convinced that the great diversity of higher education systems in the Europe Region constitutes an exceptionally rich cultural asset which should be preserved, and desiring to enable all their peoples to benefit fully from this rich cultural asset by facilitating access by the inhabitants of each Contracting State to the educational resources of the other Contracting States, more especially by authorizing them to continue their education in higher educational institutions in those other States¹

Considering that, to authorize admission to further stages of study, the concept of the recognition of studies should be employed, a concept which in a context of social and international mobility, makes it possible to evaluate the level of education reached bearing in mind knowledge acquired, as attested by diplomas and degrees obtained and also the individual's other relevant qualifications² so far as these may be deemed acceptable by competent authorities,

Considering that the recognition by all the Contracting States of studies, certificates, diplomas and degrees obtained in any one of them is intended to develop the international mobility of persons and the exchange of ideas, knowledge and scientific and technological experience, and that it would be desirable to accept foreign students into establishments of higher education on the understanding that recognition of their studies or diplomas shall at no time confer on them greater rights than those enjoyed by national students,

Noting that this recognition constitutes one of the conditions necessary for:

1. Enabling means of education existing in their territories to be used as effectively as possible,
2. Ensuring that teachers, students, research workers and professional workers have greater mobility,
3. Alleviating the difficulties encountered on their return by persons who have been trained or educated abroad,

Desiring to ensure that studies, certificates, diplomas and degrees are recognized as widely as possible, taking into account the principles of the promotion of lifelong education, the democratization of education, and the adoption and application of an education policy allowing for structural, economic, technological and social changes and suited to the cultural context of each country,

Determined to sanction and organize their future collaboration in these matters by means of a convention which will be the starting point for concerted dynamic action taken in particular by means of national, bilateral, subregional and multilateral machinery already existing or that may be deemed necessary,

Mindful that the ultimate objective set by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization consists in "preparing an International Convention on the Recognition and the Validity of Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates issued by establishments of Higher Learning and Research in all Countries",

Have agreed as follows:

I. DEFINITIONS

Article 1

1. For the purpose of this Convention, the "recognition" of a foreign certificate, diploma or degree of higher education means its acceptance as a valid credential by the competent authorities in a Contracting State and the granting to its holder of rights enjoyed by persons who possess a national certificate, diploma or degree with which the foreign one is assessed as comparable.

Recognition is further defined as follows:

- (a) Recognition of a certificate, diploma or degree with a view to undertaking or pursuing studies at the higher level shall enable the holder to be considered for entry to the higher educational and research institutions of any Contracting State as if he were the holder of a comparable certificate, diploma or degree issued in the Contracting State concerned. Such recognition does not exempt the holder of the foreign certificate, diploma or degree from complying with the conditions (other than those relating to the holding of a diploma) which may be required for admission to the higher educational or research institution concerned of the receiving State.
- (b) Recognition of a foreign certificate, diploma or degree with a view to the practice of a profession is recognition of the professional preparation of the holder for the practice of the profession concerned, without prejudice, however, to the legal and professional rules or procedures in force in the Contracting States concerned. Such recognition does not exempt the holder of the foreign certificate, diploma or degree from complying with any other conditions for the practice of the profession concerned which may be laid down by the competent governmental or professional authorities.
- (c) Recognition of a certificate, diploma or degree should not, however, entitle the holder to more rights in an-