

ENIC Network (Council of Europe/UNESCO)
NARIC Network (European Commission)

Rome, June 2019

ENIC Bureau and NARIC Advisory Board
Report on the global dimension
of the ENIC and NARIC Networks

Distribution: ENICs and NARICs

Ms. Chiara FINOCCHIETTI (ENIC-NARIC Italy)

Table of contents

Introduction.....	3
Objectives of this report	4
(1) Latest trends on the internationalisation of higher education	4
Quick Facts.....	9
(2) Results of the survey on the global dimension of ENICs and NARICs.....	10
Cooperation activities.....	11
Development of information sources related to non-European regions/countries	13
Possible strategic developments in recognition for the ENIC-NARIC networks at global level.....	14
Internationalisation strategy at national level that impacts also on recognition.....	15
Bilateral/multilateral agreements with countries/regions to foster automatic and/or mutual recognition of qualifications	16
(3) Recent initiatives related to the global dimension of the ENIC and NARIC Networks	16
Systematic inclusion of the global dimension in the annual joint ENIC-NARIC meetings	16
Renewal of the ENIC-NARIC Website	18
Ongoing developments in other regions.....	19
Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education	19
The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #4	20
Erasmus+ Key Action 2 - Capacity building in the field of higher education.....	20
(4) Concluding remarks: possible follow-up actions	21

Introduction

Considering the latest developments in the recognition field – including the 2018 Ministerial commitment to work on further developing mobility and recognition across the European Higher Education Area - EHEA, the ongoing revision processes of UNESCO regional recognition conventions, the coming into force of Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (Tokyo Convention) in 2018, the ongoing process towards the global convention on recognition, the importance of implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (UN SDGs), especially the SDG #4 on Education, the numerous projects led by ENICs and NARICs – the ENIC Bureau (EB) and the NARIC Advisory Board (NAB) has defined a work plan for the period 2017-2019. The work plan was designed as a “roadmap” for the EB/NAB in the view of prioritizing the issues to be tackled during this period. More generally, the work plan intended to reinforce the role of the ENIC and NARIC Networks at both ‘practitioner’ and policy level.

The work plan is made of specific action lines, articulated around five main dimensions:

- ENIC-NARIC Networks and the ENIC-NARIC centres;
- ENIC-NARIC Networks and the higher education policy developments;
- ENIC-NARIC Networks and the other stakeholders interested in mobility and recognition issues;
- ENIC-NARIC Networks and the World;
- Visibility and transparency of the ENIC-NARIC Networks.

Through the five dimensions, the EB/NAB aims at reinforcing the cooperation with other regions of the world and supporting developments in those regions. More specifically, the following specific action lines were envisaged:

- Updating the report on the external dimension of the ENIC-NARIC Networks drafted in 2015;
- Exploring, with UNESCO and the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) Bureau, feasible ways to reinforce relations of the ENIC-NARIC Networks with other regions, including with existing regional networks;
- Increase the dialogue between the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the Tokyo Recognition Convention, and the dialogue with the global convention;
- Reflecting on new approaches to make the participation of international experts more efficient, more sustainable and more significant in the relations between the ENIC and NARIC Networks and other regions;
- Share the expertise of the ENIC-NARIC network with a peer learning approach in the framework of the EHEA Thematic Peer Group on implementation of Lisbon Recognition Convention;
- Increase the role of ENIC-NARIC network within the professional circles worldwide and cooperation with them on mutual issues of interest (i.e. AACRO, TAICEp, etc.).

Objectives of this report

This report follows a previous one dating back to 2015. The 2015 report reflected the work started in 2010, attempting to get a better picture on the global dimension of the ENIC and NARIC Networks.

Basically, this report is structured as an explanatory work, providing specific information on the latest trends related to the Internationalisation of higher education and recognition. It also tackles the topic of applications for recognition of qualifications received from ENIC-NARIC Centres from the top non LRC countries, recognition of qualification for refugees, information sources and resources related to non LRC countries and other regions in the world, including contact points and their main stakeholders. The 1st section is dedicated to the latest trends related to student and graduate mobility, and more generally internationalization of higher education, including the latest data from OECD. In section (2), dedicated to the results of the survey on the global dimension of ENIC-NARIC centres, it was decided to bring anew the results of the survey carried out in 2015, with the aim to compare on the trends and changes from that time on, as well as the need to a new survey, based also on the new developments in the European region as well as worldwide. Those results do not only refer to the top countries not parties to the LRC, from which ENICs and NARICs received recognition requests, they also provide information about the top countries parties to the LRC, as well as the involvement of ENICs and NARICs in the global dimension of recognition – through for example participation in specific projects, cooperation processes, activities, etc. Considering the developments since 2015 related to information sources and resources – in particular the development of the ENIC-NARIC website with the UNESCO regions section – there was no need to list sources, resources or contact points related to third countries/regions. Section (3) of this report provides an overview of the recent initiatives related to the global dimension of recognition in which the ENIC and NARIC Networks play a role. Last but not least, in the conclusions, follow-up actions are proposed in the view of reinforcing the global dimension of the Networks.

In summary, this report provides a new ‘state of play’ concerning the global dimension of the ENIC and NARIC Networks, focusing not only on the current situation within individual centres, but also on the recent and forthcoming developments that are and will impact the global dimension.

The report was prepared by Ms. Chiara Finocchietti (ENIC-NARIC Italy), reviewed and endorsed by the EB/NAB as well as the Secretariats of the Networks. The draft version of this report was presented and discussed by the ENIC and NARIC Networks on the occasion of the annual joint ENIC-NARIC meeting, organised on 16-18 June 2019 in Cologne, Germany.

(1) Latest trends on the internationalisation of higher education¹

Higher Education has changed a lot on the last 20 years worldwide. Mobility is increasing considerably and is becoming more and more global. During the last 20 years the number of mobile students more than doubled, from 2 million mobility students in 1999 to 5 million in

¹ The contents of this section is a summary of the main indicators contained in “OECD indicators Education at a Glance 2018”.

2016, at an average annual rate of 5.1% among OECD countries and 6.4% among non-OECD countries.

Governments and individuals are looking to higher education to broaden students' horizons and help them to better understand and expand their knowledge of other societies and languages, and thus improve their prospects on the labour market.

Thus, the factors driving the general increase in student mobility range from the demand for higher education worldwide and the perceived value of studying abroad, to specific policies that aim at fostering student mobility within a geographical area, as is the case in Europe.

In the OECD latest statistics, data on international student flows illustrate the strength of proximity factors, such as language, historical ties, geographical distance, bilateral relationships and political framework conditions (e.g. the European Higher Education Area) as key determinants for mobility. Students tend to be more into international mobility as they aim for any advanced level of higher education (i.e. master, Ph.D and post doc). In 2016 there were 3.5 million international students enrolled in higher education studies accross the OECD countries. International students account for only 6% of total enrolment in higher education, but they represent 26% of enrolment in doctoral programs.

International higher education students favour STEM fields: one-third of them enrolled in these fields in 2016. International students represent at least 9% of tertiary enrolment in natural sciences, mathematics and statistics, and information and communication technologies, and 7% in engineering, manufacturing and construction.

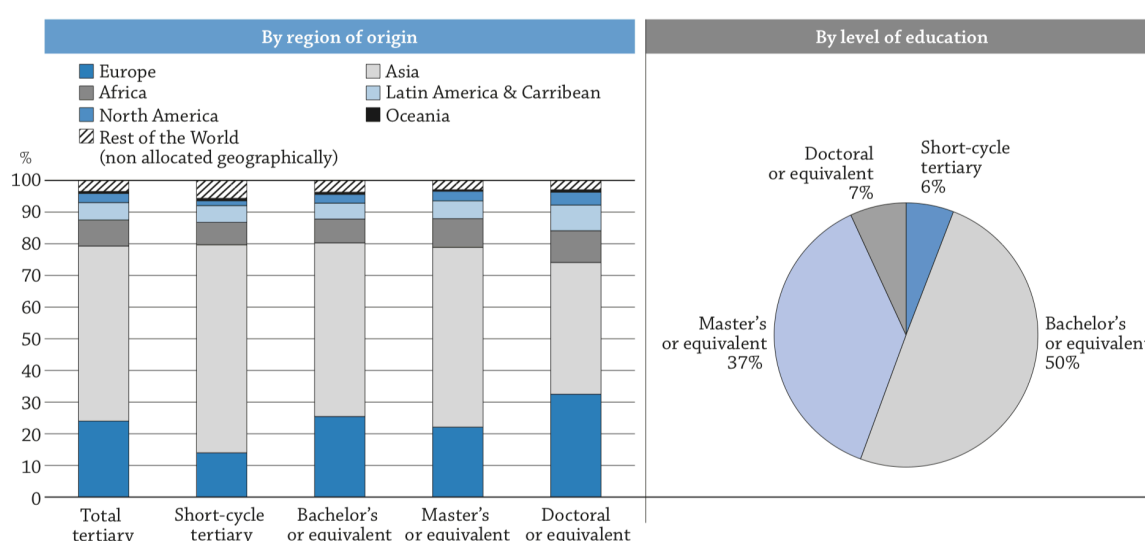
European students (representing 24% of the OECD international enrolment) are more internationally mobile at 1st (Bachelor) and 3rd (Ph.D) (respectively 25% and 35%) Bologna cycle, while the Asian students (55% of OECD international students) tend to be internationally mobile at short cycle and 2nd cycle (Master) programs (respectively 66% and 57%).

Student mobility increases at the doctoral level for all other regions of origin of international students.

Students from Asia enrolled in the OECD higher education programs at all levels, create the largest group of international students (1.9 million or 55% of all international students in 2016).

Figure B6.2. Distribution of international students studying in OECD countries, by region of origin and level of education (2016)

Percentage of international or mobile students enrolled in OECD countries



Source: OECD (2018), Education at a Glance Database, <http://stats.oecd.org>. See Source section at the end of this indicator for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-36-en>).

The number of students from China is over 860.000. Two-thirds of Asian students converge towards only three countries: Australia (15%), the United Kingdom (11%) and the United States (38%).

Africa and the Americas (North America, South America and the Caribbean) – both with fewer than 300 000 international students – remain far behind as sending regions. Three-quarters of African students enrolled in OECD countries study in Europe, especially France (35%), the United Kingdom (12%) and Germany (7%), whereas North and Latin American students are divided between the United States (37%) and Europe (45%). Among Latin American students in OECD countries, 12% choose to study in Spain, also due to the strong cultural, language and historical factors. The same phenomenon is seen among North American students' tendency to gravitate towards the United Kingdom (22%).

The United States is the top OECD destination country for mobile higher education students. Of the 3.5 million international students in the OECD area, 971.000 enroll in programs in the United States. English-speaking countries are the most attractive overall, with four countries receiving over half the mobile students. United Kingdom follows the United States, in the second place, accounting for 432.000 international students, Australia 336.000 and Canada 189.000. International students in these countries mainly originate from Asia, accounting for 87% of international students in Australia, 77% in the United States, 61% in Canada and 52% in the United Kingdom. Such factor is related also to the fact of English being the lingua franca of the globalised world, Therefore, to no surprise, the above countries where English is an official language (either legally or de facto), are top OECD destination countries for international students.

Europe remains still one of the major attractions on international mobility, with 845.000 European students crossing borders for the purpose of studying (24% of all mobile students enrolled in OECD countries). European students prefer to stay in Europe: 80% of them enroll

in higher education studies in another European country. This is partly also due to the EU Erasmus Plus program.

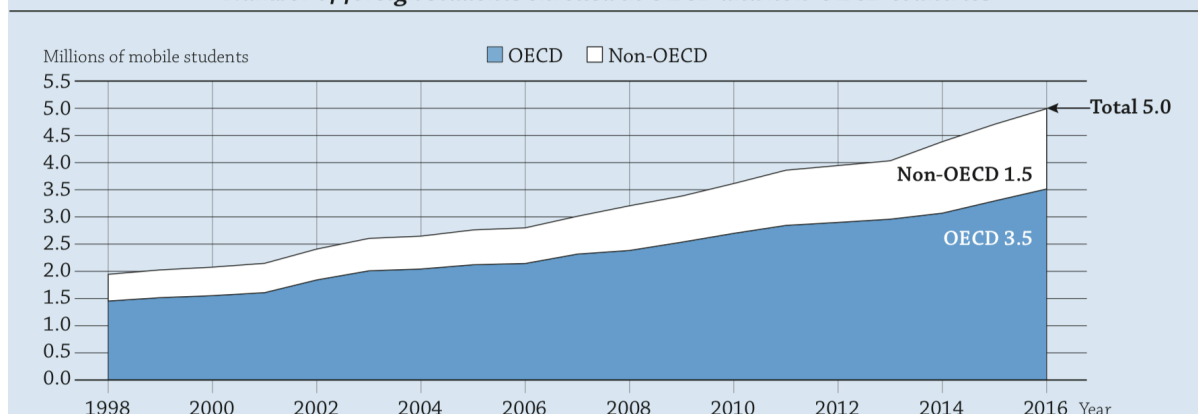
The European Union is another key geographical area of inward mobility, with 1.6 million international students enrolled in European programs. France and Germany (both at 245.000) are major host countries for international students, far ahead of Italy (93.000), the Netherlands (90.000) and Austria (70.000). But mobility channels differ significantly between these two large players. While a majority of mobile students entering France come from Africa (42%), other European countries remain the main source of international enrolment for Germany (40%). For both countries, Asia comes second as a region of origin, accounting for 21% of total incoming mobile students in France and 36% in Germany. International students in Austria, Italy and the Netherlands are also mainly European, while inflows from Latin American countries make a significant contribution to Spanish higher education cohorts, as well as to those of smaller receiving countries, such as Portugal. Small European countries particularly rely on intra-European mobility. More than 80% of students entering the Czech Republic, Denmark, Luxembourg, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia travel from inside Europe.

The Russian Federation is also a major destination country, with 250.000 foreign students enrolled in its higher education programs. It is also a regional catalyst of student inflows, with two-thirds of them coming from neighboring countries that have historical links with the former Soviet Union: Azerbaijan (6%), Belarus (6%), Kazakhstan (28%), Turkmenistan (7%), Ukraine (9%) and Uzbekistan (8%).

Student migration into the OECD area remains dynamic, but new migration poles are consolidating in developing economies. Data on the students who cross borders for the sole purpose of study (also defined as international students) between 2013 and 2016 show an estimated 19% increase in international student flows towards the OECD area. The largest increases in incoming student numbers have been observed in Estonia, Latvia, Poland and the Russian Federation, where the number of international students enrolled in national higher education programs nearly doubled over the period. Other attracting poles include Chile (an increase of 52%), Mexico (58%) and Turkey (62%). Conversely, Austria and the Slovak Republic experienced a slight decline (a decrease of 1%) in the number of international enrolments between 2013 and 2016.

Figure B6.a. Growth in international or foreign enrolment in tertiary education worldwide (1998 to 2016)

Number of foreign students enrolled in OECD and non-OECD countries



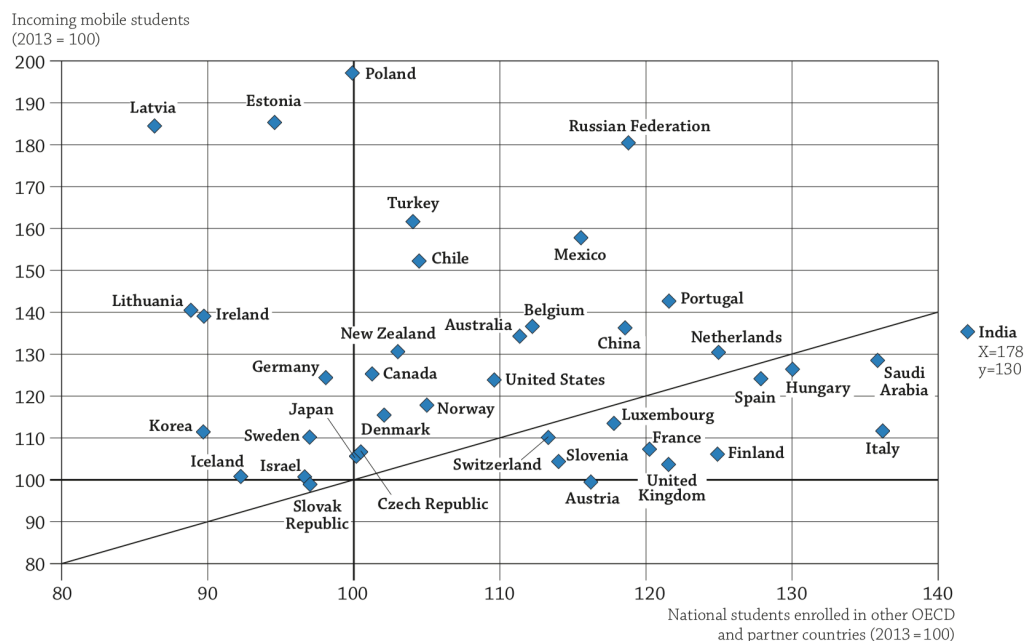
Note: The data sources use similar definitions, thus making their combination possible. Missing data were imputed with the closest data reports to ensure that breaks in data coverage do not result in breaks in time series.

Source: OECD / UIS / Eurostat (2018). See *Source* section at the end of this indicator for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-36-en>).

Outward student mobility towards OECD countries also increased between 2013 and 2016 for many origin countries, but to a more limited extent. The largest increase was observed for students coming from India (an increase of 78% compared to 2013), far ahead of students coming from OECD countries, such as Finland, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom (increases between 22% and 37% over the same period) and from China and Saudi Arabia. Conversely, outward mobility decreased by 10% or more for students coming from Ireland, Korea, Latvia and Lithuania².

² OECD indicators Education at a Glance 2018

Figure B6.3. Change in the outflow compared to the inflow of mobile students (2013 to 2016)
Indices of change of inward and outward mobility (2013 = 100)



Note: Excludes incoming mobile students in short-cycle tertiary education for Italy and Spain. The black diagonal line represents where the inward mobility change equals the outward mobility change.

Source: OECD (2018), Education at a Glance Database, <http://stats.oecd.org>. See Source section at the end of this indicator for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-36-en>).

Quick Facts

Top 10 destination countries:

- United States
- United Kingdom
- Australia
- Canada
- France
- Germany
- Russian Federation
- Japan
- China
- Italy

Top 10 countries of origin of mobile students:

- China (860,000 students studying abroad)
- India (189,500)

- Republic of Korea (123,700)
- Germany (117,600)
- Saudi Arabia (62,500)
- France (62,400)
- United States (58,100)
- Malaysia (55,600)
- Viet Nam (53,800)
- Iran (51,600)

Regions that host the largest number of mobile students:

- North America and Western Europe
- East Asia and the Pacific
- Central and Eastern Europe

(2) Results of the survey on the global dimension of ENICs and NARICs

The results of the survey carried out in 2015 have been updated and integrated with new data with the aim of gaining a picture of the new developments in the European region and worldwide.

As described below, the results have been analysed with the aim of gathering information on:

- the current situation on the requests for recognition per country;
- the involvement of ENICs and NARICs in the global dimension of recognition, through participation in specific projects and development of new information sources/tools;
- possible strategic development in recognition that may have effects on the ENIC-NARIC Network;
- existence of national strategies that impacts also on recognition.

A total of 25 countries responded to the survey.

In absolute figures, the following countries resulted as the top 10 countries (INCLUDING those belonging to the European region) from which ENIC-NARIC centres receive a request for recognition:

1. United Kingdom;
2. United States of America;
3. India;
4. Russian Federation;
5. Ukraine;

6. Turkey;
7. Germany;
8. Italy;
9. Romania;
10. Poland together with Spain and Syria.

The following countries have been indicated as the top 10 countries EXCLUDING those belonging to the European region:

1. India;
2. USA;
3. China;
4. Iran;
5. Pakistan;
6. Syria;
7. Brazil;
8. Egypt;
9. Nigeria;
10. South Africa.

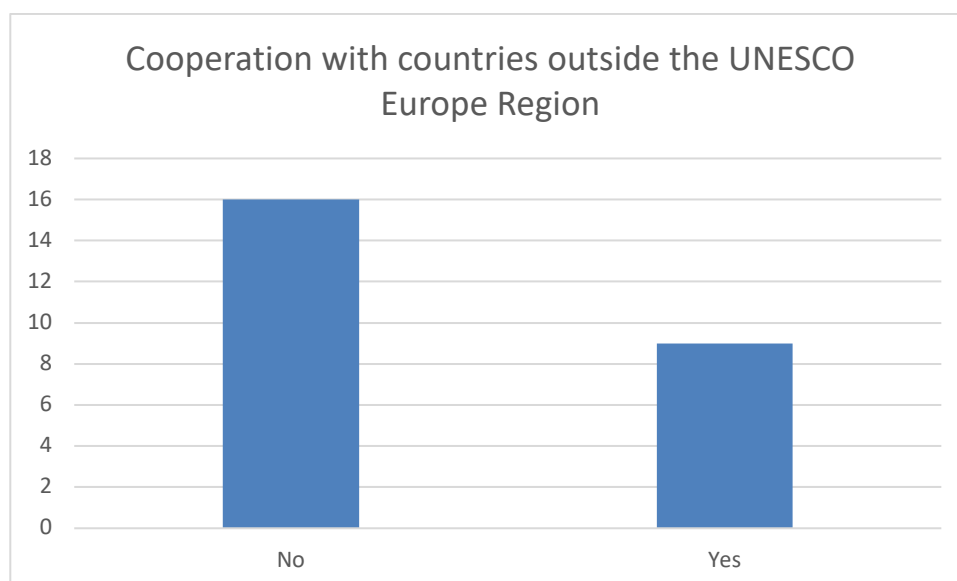
The survey shows a great diversity in countries from which request for recognition are received: more than 60 countries have been mentioned by respondents.

Compared to the last survey, it has to be underlined that new countries, such as Syria and South Africa have been inserted in the top 10 list. On the other side, France and Venezuela have slipped some positions.

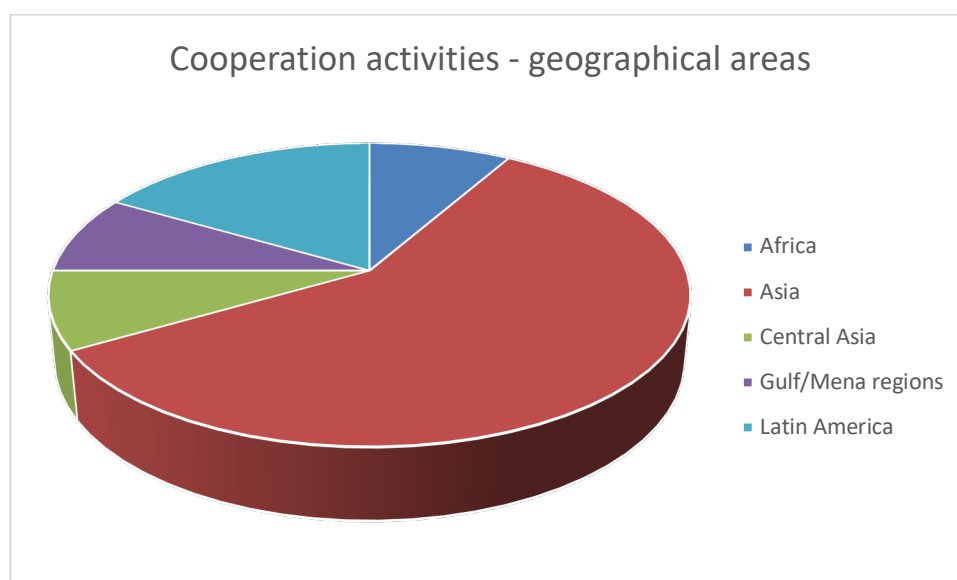
Cooperation activities

The survey also included a question on whether the centres are participating in cooperation activities with other regions of the world.

The results show that 16 centres are involved in international projects/activities out of a total of 25 respondents.



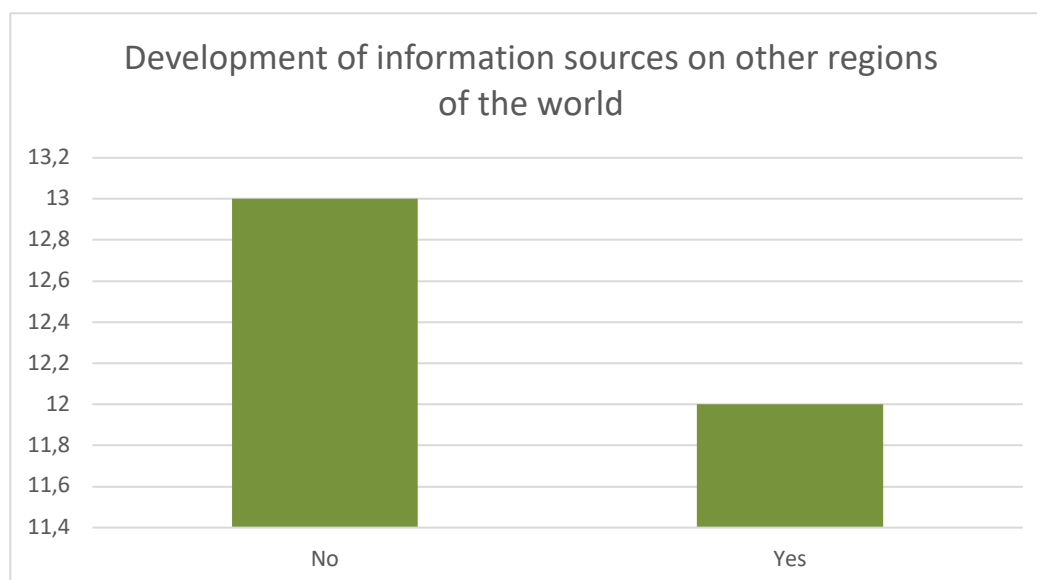
Data shows that cooperation activities are mainly taking place in Asia-Pacific and the Mediterranean. Noteworthy, contrary to the previous survey, it was seen that cooperation with Latin American Countries has been strengthened mainly through the implementation of EU funded projects.



Lastly, it is worth mentioning that some centres take part in projects focused on recognition of qualifications held by refugees.

Development of information sources related to non-European regions/countries

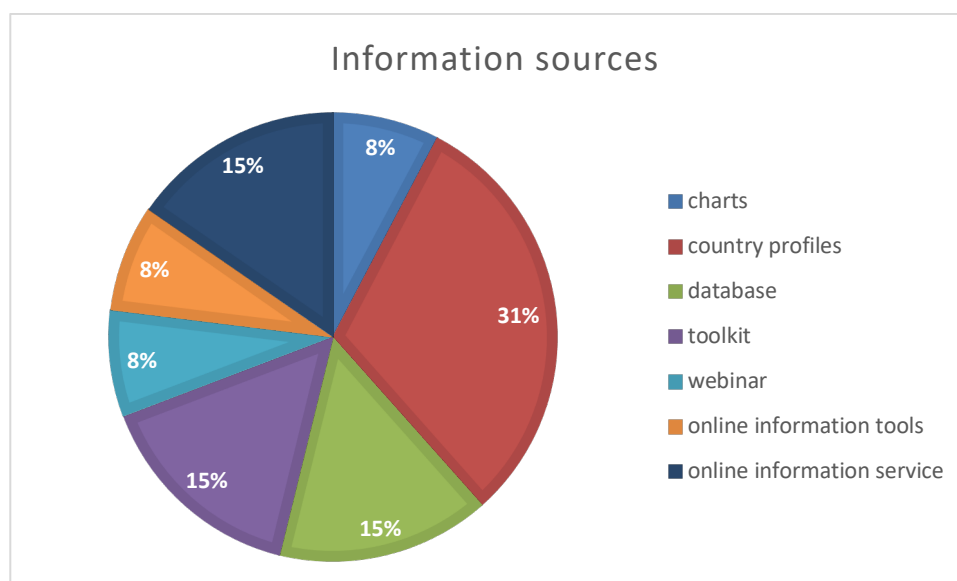
To the question whether the centers have developed information sources/tools since 2010, related to other regions of the world, 13 respondents replied positively.



As shown in the chart below, the main tools developed are country profiles, both for internal use and published online. Some centres have also developed online information services, such as the "[evaluation service](#)" including countries from outside the Europe region and the information system regarding the recognition of foreign educational credentials "[Anabin](#)".

Among the information sources that are available online, it is also worth mentioning:

- The [Database](#) of institutions within those countries pertaining to the Holy See system;
- The [Directory of Comparability Assessment Outcomes](#);
- The [country profiles](#) of nearly 100 education systems in the world.

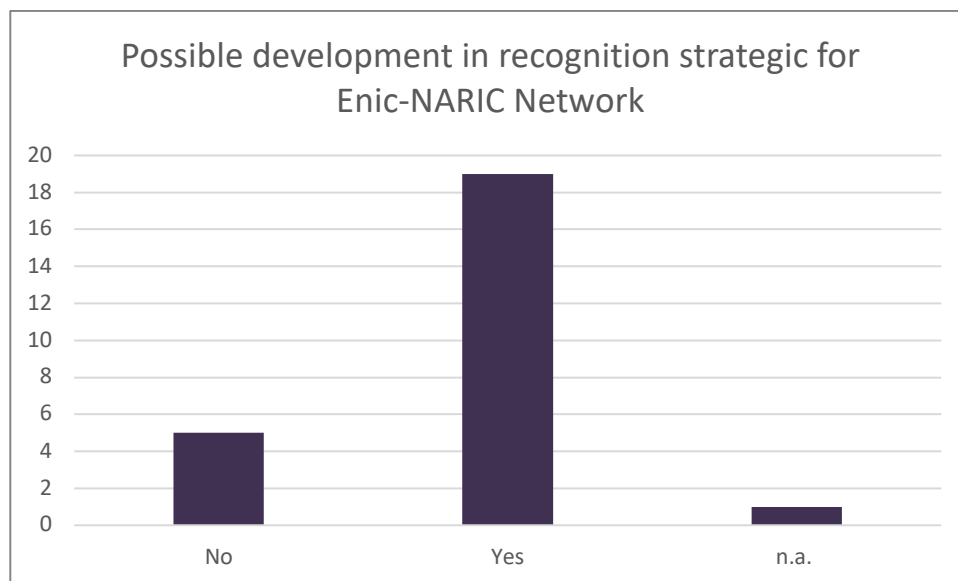


Possible strategic developments in recognition for the ENIC-NARIC networks at global level

The majority of respondents has identified the drafting and the subsequent implementation of the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education as the key strategic initiative for the Network at global level.

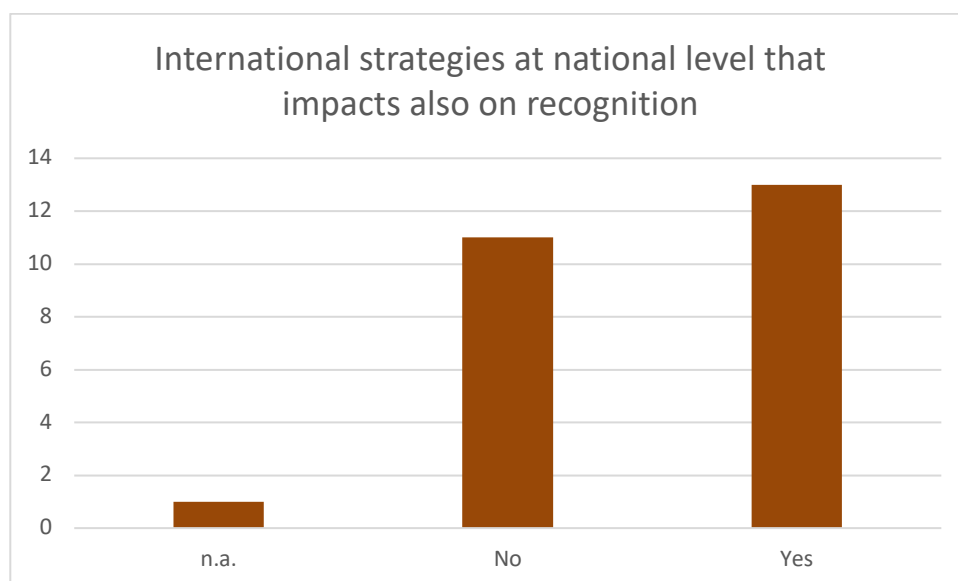
According to the answer of the respondents, the Global Convention will help focus on the importance of recognition and academic mobility and facilitate transparency and cooperation between different authorities.

Some centres have also underlined that the implementation of the Global Convention will also facilitate the establishment of information centres in countries outside the European region. Indeed, strengthening the relations between different stakeholders at national and international level is seen as a fundamental element for the Network, which is also linked to the implementation of capacity building activities.



Internationalisation strategy at national level that impacts also on recognition.

The survey also included a question concerning the existence of internationalization strategy at national level that impacts also on recognition. About half of the respondents has replied positively. Internationalisation strategies are focused on how to process the request for recognition and national recognition systems. Respondents also indicates their key countries of interest, such as United States of Americas, Gulf/MENA regions, Brazil, China, India, Japan, Russia and South Africa, Indonesia, South-Korea, Mexico and Vietnam.



Bilateral/multilateral agreements with countries/regions to foster automatic and/or mutual recognition of qualifications

To the question of whether the centres have bilateral/multilateral agreements to foster automatic and/or mutual recognition of qualifications, the majority of respondents replied positively. Respondents have agreements with countries of the European region as well as with non-European countries, such as Chile, Colombia, Peru, China and Vietnam.

(3) Recent initiatives related to the global dimension of the ENIC and NARIC Networks

The ENIC and NARIC Networks are certainly turned towards the wider world, not only because the centres are located in different regions, but also because the core mission of every centre relates to the recognition of foreign qualifications, whatever the awarding country is. It is most likely because of those two elements that the global dimension of the ENIC and NARIC Networks has rapidly become a crucial element in the development and professionalization of the Networks. Indeed, because some of the ENIC centres are part of different UNESCO regions (and thus other regional conventions) and because of its well-functioning and effectiveness, the ENIC and NARIC Networks have raised interest in other regions of the world. On the other side, because individual centres are confronted more and more with qualifications coming from different regions, it has become a necessity to find reliable information sources and resources, and thus to structure the relations with counterparts in third countries and regions. The issue of recognition of qualifications held by refugees is also an issue many ENIC-NARIC centres have been facing in the last years, therefore making it a necessity to try and find the most appropriate tools for the recognition of qualifications held by them. The latest topic has seen an increased cooperation at international, thanks also the projects supported by Council of Europe and European Commission.

The last ten years have seen important steps in the development of the global dimension of the ENIC and NARIC Networks, not only because of the report produced by the related working group, but also because the Networks, under the impulsion of the EB/NAB and the Secretariats at the time, started inviting systematically non-European experts to the annual joint meetings. As described more in detail in this section, the initiatives related to the global dimension taken since then could be distinguished by three main objectives:

- Capacity-building;
- Information sources and resources development;
- Policy developments.

Systematic inclusion of the global dimension in the annual joint ENIC-NARIC meetings

Since 2010, experts from outside the European region have been invited to the annual joint ENIC-NARIC meetings, primarily to present educational systems outside the Network countries, recognition procedures and practices as well as the current and future challenges related to higher education. Here is the list of the invited experts:

- 2010, Sèvres: Prof. Ved PRACKASH, India;
- 2011, Warsaw: Mr Wan GONG, China;

- 2012, Toledo: Mr Guillermo Pablo LÓPEZ ANDRADE, Mexico;
- 2013, Split: Mr Joe SAMUELS, South Africa;
- 2014, Rome: Prof. Natheer ABU OBEID, Jordan; Dr. Jamal HUSSEIN, Palestinian Authority; Dr. Paulo SPELLER, Brazil;
- 2015, Bregenz: Ms. Afsaneh GÄCHTER, Iran; Mr José LANDI, Argentina;
- 2016, Amsterdam: Mr Wang LIBING, UNESCO Bangkok;
- 2017, Copenhagen: Ms Melanie GOTTLIEB, AACRAO, USA; Margit SCHATZMAN, TAICEP;
- 2018, Prague: Caryn McTIGHE MUSIL, AACU, USA; Leslee CLAUSON EICHER, TAICEP, USA; DongSeok SEO, KARIC, Korea; Ms. Xiong XING, CSCSE, China; Li PING, Director of Verification Section, CDGDC, China; Mr. Shi PENGJIAN, CHESICC, China;
- 2019, Cologne: Srbijanka TURAJLIĆ, Serbia; Joe SAMUELS, South Africa; Ying-Wai Steve LAI, Ka Man Raymond TSOI, Hong Kong Qualifications Framework Secretariat; Rob FEARNSIDE, HKCAAVQ, Hong Kong; Melanie GOTTLIEB, Aacrao.

The last annual meetings of the network have seen an increase on the internal cooperation of the ENIC-NARIC centers among themselves, sharing of good practice, and presentation of country profiles from other regions of the world.

It is interesting to underline that initially the participation of international experts was limited to the presentation of their higher education systems, as well as their recognition procedures and practices. Therefore, those invitations responded to a need of capacity-building within ENICs and NARICs related to non-European systems and the challenges they face. However, progressively, under the impulse of the EB/NAB and the Secretariats, the international experts have been asked to have a more active role in the annual joint meetings and contribute specifically to the policy discussions. In the same perspective, with the “reshaping” of the annual joint meetings initiated in 2014, the global dimension of the Networks has been more clearly and systematically included in the programme, thus benefiting from the international experts invited:

- Amsterdam 2016, plenary session on “ENIC-NARIC and the world: cooperation with other regions”:
 - Africa
 - Asia-Pacific;
- Copenhagen 2017, plenary session on “Global and inter-regional cooperation”:
 - Global Convention
 - Perception of EHEA tools by non EHEA countries: United States and Canada.
- Prague 2018, plenary on the Global Convention;
- Cologne 2019, Keynotes on “The changing landscape of recognition”; News and Talk from the “Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education and “Bologna Follow-Up Group / Thematic Peer Group on LRC and

Recognition”; workshop “Recognition and ongoing international (higher) education policy processes”.

Renewal of the ENIC-NARIC Website

The electronic provision of information is one of the most essential building blocks of the ENIC and NARIC Networks, enhancing cooperation, mutual trust, and efficient information exchanges, thus supporting the realization of the centres’ daily tasks. The ELCORE Group plays a key role in managing, supporting, and proposing further developments in the electronic provision of information to the Networks. Since its formal launch in 2002, the ENIC-NARIC website (www.enic-naric.net) has undergone various developments and improvements, becoming the unique gateway to information on academic and professional recognition in the European region – and worldwide – for ENICs and NARICs, individuals, higher education institutions, employers and any other parties involved in recognition issue.

In 2014, the new ENIC-NARIC website has been launched, and it is daily managed and updated through an EU co-funded project in the framework of the Erasmus+ programme, coordinated by the Italian ENIC-NARIC centre (CIMEA) and in close cooperation with the ELCORE Group and the Secretariats. Currently the objective with regards to the global dimension is three-fold:

- Update the section “UNESCO regions” of the website. This is one of the key points to ensure relevance of the ENIC-NARIC website with regards to the global dimension of the networks, also taking into account the recent establishment of National Information Centres (NICs) in the Asia-Pacific region with the entry into force of the Tokyo Convention;
- Reinforce the overall communication strategy of the ENIC-NARIC networks to enhance its role on a global landscape and strengthen capacity of centres in the provision of information according to LRC, starting by a specific training and activities targeted to the use of social media for centres;
- Use the website as a multiplier of the policy documents and guidelines of ENIC-NARIC centres with regards to the full implementation of the LRC and to increase the dialogue with relevant stakeholders at global level.

In 2015 when developing the content, CIMEA – with the specific support of UNESCO and the ELCORE Group – created new sections related to UNESCO regions. Although information about those regions was already provided in the previous version of the website, huge efforts were made to provide information resources on the legal framework, the existing networks and associations. Last but not least, a list of countries and main information resources (including links to recognition authorities, ministries, quality assurance agencies, etc.) were included and updated from time to time accordingly.

Now the crucial point is updating this section with the new relevant information, taking into account the recent establishment of National Information Centres (NICs) in the Asia-Pacific region with the entry into force of the Tokyo Convention.

Together with the management and updating of the website there is the task of manage the networks list-serves. CIMEA, according to the indications of the ELCORE group and EB/NAB, created two new listservs in addition to the four mailing lists already existing (Head of Centres,

Recognition, EB/NAB, ELCORE): the listserv dedicated to communication managers within ENIC-NARIC centres and the MERIC listserv.

Ongoing developments in other regions

Under the impulse of UNESCO, two major developments related to existing regional recognition conventions, have been observed in other regions of the world. In February 2018, the revised Asia-Pacific Recognition Convention entered into force, and as of April 2019, seven Member States – Australia, China, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, Republic of Korea and Turkey – and Holy See have ratified the Tokyo Convention on recognition. The so-called Tokyo convention, together with LRC have thus become what is generally called “second generation conventions” – integrating principles such as the applicant’s right for fair and transparent recognition, applicant’s right to appeal, acknowledgment of the diversity of educational systems, introduction of the concept of “substantial differences”, links with the structural components of higher education systems (mainly quality assurance and qualifications frameworks), etc.

Although the developments in other regions are the results of efforts led by the member countries and supported by UNESCO, the ENIC and NARIC Networks have been trying to contribute as much as possible to those developments. Certainly, the invitation of international experts to the annual joint ENIC-NARIC meetings has had a positive impact among the partners in other regions. In the same perspective, on request of UNESCO, the ENIC and NARIC Networks, the LRC Committee Bureau as well as representatives of individual ENICs and NARICs were invited on several occasions to participate in meetings related to the other regional recognition conventions:

- Ms Silvia Bianco (ENIC-NARIC Italy) and Mr. Stig Arne Skjerven (ENIC-NARIC Norway) were invited to the Working group on the revision of the Arab Convention on recognition, in Egypt in October 2017.
- Mr. Gunnar Vaht (ENIC-NARIC Estonia) Mr. Luca Lantero and Ms. Chiara Finocchietti (ENIC-NARIC Italy), Mr. Stig Arne Skjerven (ENIC-NARIC Norway) were invited to the First Session of the Committee of the Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (The Tokyo Convention Committee) in October 2018, in South Korea.

Other experts have been invited to other related activities.

Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education

Following a feasibility study carried out amongst all regions in the world, the UNESCO General Conference, at its 37th session in November 2013, recognized that a global convention could improve academic and professional mobility, enhance international cooperation in higher education, and represent a significant step forward, towards global recognition and trust. Then, UNESCO was invited to initiate the process of elaborating a global convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications, to undertake consultations with Member States and relevant stakeholders, in order to consider key issues related to such a global convention and to prepare a draft preliminary report on the possible global recognition convention for the 38th session of the UNESCO General Conference.

Following the meetings of the group of experts, many of them members of the ENIC-NARIC Network, UNESCO conveyed the 1st meeting of the Members of the Drafting Committee appointed by the Director General in the preparation of the Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications, in Paris on May 2016. This meeting was followed by other three ones, all part of the same framework. The draft text of the Global convention was discussed. Discussions in all these meetings took into consideration also the input from the ENIC-NARIC centers on:

- current and future trends in the field of recognition of higher education qualifications;
- potential aims, principles and key issues to be tackled in a global normative instrument;
- articulation between the global and regional conventions;
- implementation mechanisms;
- recognition of refugees qualifications.
- concept of fighting education fraud;
- the role of technology in supporting recognition.

In December 2018 the 1st Intergovernmental Meeting on the Global Convention on Higher Education ENIC-NARIC members took place in Paris. The meeting had the participation of 240 delegates from around 140 countries, plus 28 observers and the UNESCO staff. There was a significant role played by the networks, with the presence of ENIC-NARIC representatives from 27 countries, plus the EB/NAB invited as observer. The second intergovernmental meeting (March 2019) will finish examining the sections that were not discussed in December, and will review the revised draft text resulting from the discussions in the intergovernmental meeting. The text as revised by the participants to the Paris meeting will go to the plenary assembly of UNESCO in October 2019 in Paris, for the approval by UNESCO member countries.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #4

In September 2015, world's leaders gathered to set ambitious goals for the future of the global community. Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) seeks to ensure "inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". Each target of the SDG 4 framework has at least one global indicator and a number of related thematic indicators designed to complement the analysis and the measurement of the target. UNESCO oversees the education SDG agenda in the context of the United Nations-led SDG framework. The UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) is co-ordinating global efforts to develop the indicator framework to monitor progress towards SDG 4 targets. In addition to collecting data, UIS works with partners to develop new indicators, statistical approaches and monitoring tools to better assess progress across the education-related SDG targets. Part of the global context of ENIC-NARIC Network should be focused also on this topic, especially on the policy development.

Erasmus+ Key Action 2 - Capacity building in the field of higher education

In the past 5 years projects financed in the framework of the "Erasmus+ Key Action 2 Capacity Building in Higher Education" are serving as an instrument to strengthen relationship with other regions, enhancing knowledge of Higher Education systems, improving recognition

policies and procedures in line with the LRC, building trust among institutional stakeholders, and favoring and increasing the quality of vertical and horizontal mobility within non-European regions and with European higher education systems. Two examples are:

- “RecoLATIN - Credential evaluation centres and recognition procedure in Latin American countries”, that involves Ministries of education, higher education institutions and associations of universities from Panama, Uruguay and Mexico, and ENIC-NARIC centres from France, Italy and Norway.
- “MERIC-Net - Mediterranean Network of National Information Centres on the Recognition of Qualifications” that involves Ministries of education, higher education institutions and associations of universities from Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia, and ENIC-NARIC centres from France, Italy and Norway. One of the scope of the project is to revitalize the MERIC network (Mediterranean Recognition Information Centres).

(4) Concluding remarks: possible follow-up actions

The latest trends related to mobility and internationalisation of higher education indicate that the globalisation of higher education – in all its constitutive elements – is a dynamic and growing phenomenon. Therefore, as confirmed by the results of the survey carried out among ENICs and NARICs, as well as past and ongoing projects, the recognition of qualifications is certainly a global issue. And therefore, the development and reinforcement of the global dimension of the ENIC and NARIC Networks are needed in order to facilitate the daily work of ENICs and NARICs, and more generally to guarantee fair and transparent recognition of qualification in the European Region and in the other UNESCO regions.

It is clear that essential developments have taken place since 2010 thanks to joint efforts and commitment of the secretariats, the EB/NAB as well as individual ENICs and NARICs. As explained more in detail in the previous section, those efforts have allowed reinforcing the capacity of the Networks to respond to the global dimension of recognition, at both practitioner and policy level. Most of those developments were possible via specific initiatives led by some individual centres and funded for a fixed period of time by one of the secretariats. For this reason it is important the funding and the work of coordination made by co-secretariat, to make these initiatives and actions systematic and sustainable by prioritizing the ones that are the most relevant for the ENIC and NARIC Networks and their global dimension. Furthermore, a wider use of new technologies and of video conferencing could also be explored in order to strengthen cooperation.

In this perspective, the following initiatives and actions might be taken in the near future:

- Update the survey on the global dimension of the ENIC and NARIC Networks every five years, or earlier if deemed appropriate;
- Update and expand the information related to UNESCO regions on the ENIC-NARIC website, for example by:
 - establishing a group of countries that would like to develop their own country profile and working in cooperation with ELCORE group and EB/NAB, with a peer learning approach;

- work in the direction of interoperability between the ENIC-NARIC website and websites of other regions' network (e.g. Asia-Pacific network);
- relaunching and reactivation of the MERIC ListServer;
- Update and revise the Joint ENIC/NARIC Charter of activities and services: it dates back to 2004, and of course some parts are dated by now, but for the “vision” about the centres remains a milestone document. Would be useful to update this taking into account the global dimension of the networks and the latest development in the field of recognition;
- Secure the systematic participation of the ENIC and NARIC Networks and the LRC Committee Bureau in the other regional conventions meetings;
- Explore further cooperation with other regions, especially where the revised conventions entered into force, in order to increase the dialogue among the different regional conventions;
- Secure the systematic participation of experts from other regions in the annual joint ENIC-NARIC meeting.

Updated 14/06/2019