

Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee Bureau

NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2026

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Dear colleagues,

We are pleased to share this first newsletter which provides a short update on the work of the LRC Committee Bureau since the beginning of the year. We hope you find it useful, and we welcome any feedback or questions.

ENIC-NARIC

A fruitful exchange with the ENIC-NARIC network

The Bureau held its first consultation workshop with the ENIC-NARIC Networks during the Annual Joint Meeting, on 25 May 2026 in Athens, under the title “Join to collaborate – the LRC Committee Bureau Workplan 2025–28”. Chaired by Allan Bruun Pedersen (President of the Bureau), the session brought together some Bureau members as well as representatives from different ENIC-NARICs.

The workshop presented the Bureau’s workplan, structured around four priority areas: (1) a coherent approach between the LRC, the other regional conventions and the Global Convention; (2) digital solutions, including AI; (3) research and monitoring; and (4) communication and transparency. Participants were invited to discuss selected activities under each priority area in more depth, including the planned position paper on the relationship with the Global Convention and the forthcoming monitoring survey on substantial differences.

The exchange was well received, and the Bureau is grateful to all who took part and shared their views. We look forward to continuing this dialogue at future ENIC-NARIC Networks meetings.

Substantial differences

Preparing a monitoring exercise on substantial differences

The Bureau is preparing its fourth monitoring exercise on the implementation of the LRC, this time focused on how the concept of “substantial differences” is understood and applied by States Parties in practice. An initial draft questionnaire was shared with ENIC-NARIC centres (ahead of the May 2026 workshop) as well as with State Parties in June 2026, and initial feedback has already been gathered. A huge thanks to those who provided the incredibly rich and helpful feedback received as part of this consultation exercise.

One point of discussion has been the scope of the list of criteria used to help identify what may constitute a substantial difference: the Bureau’s intention is for this list to be as comprehensive as possible, in order to capture the full range of recognition practices actually in use – including elements that may not reflect current good practice – but also to enable a longitudinal comparison of how these practices may have evolved over the past decade, since the 2016 monitoring exercise.

Based on feedback received from State Parties and ENIC-NARIC Networks, Bureau members are revising the initial draft questionnaire over the summer with a view to officially launch the monitoring exercise data collection by circulating the final version to States Parties in the last quarter of 2026. We will share further details, including timelines, in due course.

Global Convention

Global Convention: feedback on the relationship text

Work is ongoing, under the Global Convention on Higher Education, on a subsidiary text addressing the relationship between the Global Convention and the regional recognition conventions, including the LRC. UNESCO presented the current state of this drafting work to ENIC-NARIC Networks in May 2026, outlining the aim of fostering a coherent international architecture that also respects the distinct character of each convention.

The subsidiary text is expected to be discussed further at the end of September 2026, and the Bureau will hold a further meeting beforehand to prepare its input. Towards the end of the year, all States Parties to all the regional recognition conventions, including the LRC, will receive the draft text for feedback and comments.

Communication

Strengthening communication

The Bureau continues to discuss how best to strengthen communication and transparency around its work, including through regular updates such as this newsletter. Other ideas under discussion include a short working paper setting out how the Bureau intends to work going forward.

The Bureau’s aim is to keep future updates regular so that States Parties and ENIC-NARIC Networks are kept informed of progress as it happens, including any consultation processes and timelines.

Meet the Bureau and Secretariat

Introducing the new LRC Bureau, elected in October 2025.



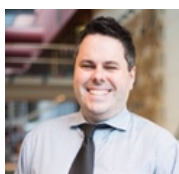
Allan Bruun Pedersen – President

Allan Bruun Pedersen is a Senior Adviser at the Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science. A longstanding expert in the recognition of qualifications and qualifications frameworks, he has also previously served as President and Vice-President of the ENIC Network.



Jenneke Lokhoff – 1st Vice-President

Jenneke Lokhoff is a Senior Policy Officer at Nuffic, the Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education. A leading expert in the recognition of foreign qualifications, she has coordinated numerous international recognition initiatives and previously served on the NARIC Board, and as President of the ENIC Bureau.



Michael Ringuette – 2nd Vice-President

Michael Ringuette is Coordinator of the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials at the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada. He has extensive expertise in international credential recognition. He served as Vice-President of the ENIC Bureau, Chair of the ELCORE Working Group, and appointed by UNESCO Electoral Group I as Vice-Chair of the Editing Group during the UNESCO 2019 Global Convention treaty negotiations from 2018 – 2019.



Elisa Petrucci – Rapporteur

Elisa Petrucci is Head of the International Cooperation and Policy Development Department at CIMEA-NARIC Italy. She has extensive expertise in international cooperation, higher education policy and the recognition of qualifications, with particular expertise in internationalization strategies, innovation in higher education – including flexibilization of learning pathways, as well as preventing and countering education fraud.



Villano Qiriazzi – Council of Europe

Villano Qiriazzi is Head of the Education Department at the Council of Europe. He has extensive experience in European education policy and cooperation, with particular expertise in education for democratic citizenship and human rights, higher education, qualifications recognition and the digital transformation of education



Catherine Dolgova-Dreyer – Council of Europe

Catherine Dolgova-Dreyer is Head of the Higher and Further Education Unit at the Council of Europe. She has extensive experience in European higher education policy, with particular expertise in qualifications recognition, academic freedom and international cooperation.



Noah W. Sobe – UNESCO

Noah W. Sobe is Chief of Section for Higher Education at UNESCO. A specialist in comparative and international education, he previously spent two decades as a professor at Loyola University Chicago and was one of the lead authors of UNESCO's Futures of Education Report.



Leila Loupis – UNESCO

Leila Loupis is a Programme Specialist in UNESCO's Section for Higher Education, where she works in the Secretariat of the Global Convention on Higher Education. She has extensive experience in international education development issues, including on teacher development, pedagogy, sustainability and education monitoring and statistics.

We welcome your feedback on this newsletter and on the Bureau's work more broadly. Please feel free to reach out to the Co-Secretariats at UNESCO or the Council of Europe, or to any Bureau member, at any time.

