

# Second meeting of the Committee of the Regional Convention (2019)

Havana, Cuba

February 09, 2024



Second meeting

Conceptual Note + Agenda

## Background

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A common objective since the first UNESCO Regional Recognition Conventions, adopted in the 1970s and 1980s, has been to harmonize and ensure fair, timely and non-discriminatory recognition procedures among States Parties in order to facilitate greater academic mobility across regions. The revision process, leading to the “second generation” of these conventions, emphasized the need to include provisions to improve reliability and quality, such as regional qualifications frameworks, accreditation and quality assurance mechanisms. They also assume the need for greater transparency of national education systems through provisions for information exchange and networking, while respecting the prerogative of national authorities in the recognition decision-making process.

To date four New Regional Conventions have been adopted: [Europe](#) (Lisbon Recognition Convention, 1997), [Asia-Pacific](#) (Tokyo Convention, 2011), [Africa](#) (Addis Convention, 2014) and [Latin America and the Caribbean](#) (2019). UNESCO is also playing a leading role in the [Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education](#), which entered into force on **March 5, 2023**.

With regard to the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region, during the "High Level Regional Ministerial Meeting on the Recognition of Studies, Degrees and Diplomas in Latin America and the Caribbean", held in Brasilia on 8-9 October 2015, the Member States of the region agreed to formulate a new Regional Convention taking into account the current challenges in higher education, particularly in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the need to have schemes plans to strengthen regional education systems to ensure quality. During this meeting, the representatives agreed to "facilitate and support the review process, as well as the creation of new special mechanisms for its implementation".

As part of the review process, Member States requested UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC) to establish a Working Group to revise the [Convention 1974](#) and propose a new text to Member States in 2018. The first meeting of the Working Group was held in Havana, Cuba, in February 2016; the second meeting was held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, in August 2016; the third meeting was held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, in June 2017; and the fourth and final meeting was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in April 2018. IESALC, as the Secretariat of the 1974 Convention, led this review process with technical support from UNESCO Headquarters.

The text resulting was adopted by twenty-three (23) Member States on **July 13, 2019** (see [authentic document](#)) during a Member States international conference approved by the UNESCO Executive Council at its 205th session (see [Document 205 EX/27](#), Part II, Decision 27.II).

The New Regional Convention (Buenos Aires, 2019, hereinafter “Regional Convention”) entered into force on October 23, 2022 with the ratifications of this pact of wills by [Cuba](#), [Grenada](#), [Peru](#), [Uruguay](#), the [Holy See](#), and Ecuador. For this reason, the Secretariat of the Regional Convention convened the States Parties to the First Meeting in Colonia del Sacramento, Uruguay, on April 13-14, 2023, and a Work Plan 2023-2024 was duly approved.

The Second ordinary meeting of the Committee will be convened in Havana, Cuba, on **February 9, 2024**, to monitor the above-mentioned work plan and agree on actions that will allow the implementation of the Regional Convention to continue.

## Justification

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Internationalization is considered one of the most important dynamics in the work of higher education institutions in the age of globalization. Its most visible aspect is undoubtedly academic mobility, of which student mobility is the most notable. In 2019, approximately 9 million students were pursuing higher education studies outside their country of origin, representing 2.6% of the global student population of approximately 238 million. However, Latin America and the Caribbean's student mobility is a mere 0,8 % (IESALC 2022), and consequently it is considered the geographical block with the lowest student mobility.

Similarly, statistics show that skilled migration has increased rapidly in recent decades, and there is every indication that it will increase even more rapidly in the future due to previously recognized causes, to which climate factors have been added.

Given the benefits that mobility brings to nations, both in the academic and labor fields, it is essential to have an instrument that harmonizes the processes of recognition of academic degrees that carry part of these human mobilizations, to take advantage of their talent in the scientific and technological leverage of the receiving countries, favoring the labor insertion that allows the deployment of human talent in circulation.

## Objectives

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To analyze and monitor the 2023-2024 Work Plan for the implementation of the Regional Convention, as well as to report on the status of ratification of this legally binding instrument in by the signatory Member States.

### Specific objectives

- To review and monitor the progress of 2023-2024 Work Plan;
- To formalize the creation of a Network of National Information Centres on Recognition, with a view to converting it into the operational arm that would enable the Secretariat to support Member States in implementing the Regional Convention (Buenos Aires, 2019);
- To reach consensus within the Committee on advocacy work towards for the ratification of the Regional Convention by the remaining signatory States;
- To monitor the status of ratification of the Regional Convention by the signatory States;
- To report on developments at the Global Convention;
- To proceed to renew the authorities of the Regional Convention Committee.

## Participants

- The 6 ratifying State Parties of the Regional Convention
- The 17 signatory State Parties to the Regional Convention
- Non-signatory States of the Regional Convention in LAC
- UNESCO Headquarters
- Convention Secretariat (IESALC)
- UNESCO Havana
- Observers:
  - Member States of UNESCO as stated in “[Definition of regions with a view to the execution by the Organization of regional activities](#)”
  - International, regional and subregional integration organizations, including the Andrés Bello Agreement, MERCOSUR, the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture, and others
  - University networks and regional spaces for dialogue and consensus building processes on higher education like ENLACES, UDUAL, and others.

Friday, February 9, 2024	
08:30 – 09:00	Accreditation of participants & observers
09:00 – 09:30	<p>Opening session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address by the Minister of Higher Education in Cuba, Dr. José Ramón Saborido</li> <li>• Address by the President of the Convention’s Committee, Dr. Gonzalo Baroni</li> <li>• Address by the Director of UNESCO/Havana, Dra. Anne Lemaistre</li> <li>• Address by the Director of UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean , Dr. Francesc Pedró</li> </ul>
09:30 – 09:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of Agenda</li> </ul> <p>In charge of: MSc. Gonzalo Baroni, president of the Regional Convention Committee</p>
09:45 – 10:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of the findings – “Feasibility study for the implementation of the Diploma Supplement (DS) in Latin America and the Caribbean”</li> </ul> <p>In charge of: José Antonio Quinteiro &amp; Flavia Colus, junior analyst of UNESCO-IESALC</p>
10:15 – 10:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Central American Diploma Supplement: proposal for a pilot implementation</li> </ul> <p>In charge of: Dr. Félix García Lausín, general secretary of the Ibero-American University Council</p>
10:45 – 11:00	Break (coffee or tea)

11:00 – 11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The DS and the Argentinian experience since its launching in 2017</li> </ul> <p>In charge of: Dr. Carlos Greco, president of the National Interuniversity Council of Argentina</p>
11:30 – 12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital management model of the European Diploma Supplement developed in Spain</li> </ul> <p>In charge of: Dr. Carlos Delgado Kloos, (to be confirmed - virtual)</p>
12:00 – 14:00	Break (coffee or tea)
14:00 – 14:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A DS proposal from the Higher Education Unit of the Uruguayan Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC)</li> </ul> <p>In charge of: Dr. Carlos Romero, responsible of the Higher Education Unit of MEC Uruguay</p>
14:30 – 15:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal for a reference SAT model for Latin America and the Caribbean</li> </ul> <p>In charge of: MSc. José Antonio Quintero, secretariat of the Regional Convention</p>
15:00 – 15:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debate - Agreeing on a DS model for Latin America and the Caribbean within the framework of the Regional Convention</li> </ul> <p>In charge of: MSc. Gonzalo Baroni, president of the Regional Convention Committee</p>
15:30 – 15:45	Break (coffee or tea)
15:45 – 16:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications: New developments</li> </ul> <p>In charge of: Dr. Vanja Gutovic, senior specialist of UNESCO Education Sector</p>
16:15 – 16:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RELACIR network (<i>Latin American and Caribbean Network of Recognition Information Centers</i>) as the operational arm of the Secretariat for the implementation of the Regional Convention: Charter &amp; Objectives</li> </ul> <p>In charge of: Dr. Francisco Contreras, specialist from the Swedish Council of Higher Education and IESALC collaborator</p>
16:45 – 16:55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The REDLACIR network – Early progress achieved by the Working Group “Governance”</li> </ul> <p>In charge of: Ministry of Education official / REDLACIR (to be confirmed)</p>
16:55 – 17:05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The REDLACIR network – Early progress achieved by the Working Group “Digitalization of credentials”</li> </ul> <p>In charge of: Ministry of Education official / REDLACIR (to be confirmed)</p>

<p><b>17:05 – 17:15</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The REDLACIR network – Early progress achieved by the Working Group “Recognition for migrants and refugees”</b></li> </ul> <p><b>In charge of:</b> Ministry of Education official / REDLACIR (to be confirmed)</p>
<p><b>17:15 – 17:30</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Presentation of the Working Document “General Orientations for the Recognition of Venezuelan Academic Qualifications”</b></li> </ul> <p><b>In charge of:</b> José Antonio Quinteiro, secretariat of the Regional Convention</p>
<p><b>17:30 – 17:45</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Election of the new authorities of the Regional Convention Committee</b></li> </ul> <p><b>In charge of:</b> MSc. Gonzalo Baroni, president of the Regional Convention Committee</p>
<p><b>17:45 – 18:00</b></p>	<p><b>Closing remarks</b></p> <p>New President of the Committee</p> <p>Director of UNESCO-IESALC, <b>Dr. Francesc Pedró</b></p> <p>Cuban Government, <b>Dra. Miriam Alpizar</b>, head of Cabinet of the Minister of Higher Education of Cuba</p>