



Webinar with RecoASIA
Impact of COVID-19 on Higher Education and Recognition

27 May 2020

Opening Remarks
Dr. Libing Wang, UNESCO Bangkok

Welcome to all, including to the over 200 guests who registered. On behalf of UNESCO, thank you for joining this discussion about the 'Impact of COVID-19 on Higher Education and Recognition'.

Thank you also to our co-host today, Mr. Luca Lantero, President of the Lisbon Recognition Convention Bureau and our partners at CIMEA, Italy. UNESCO is so pleased to be an Associate Partner of the new RecoASIA project, especially given the far-reaching impacts of COVID-19.

The global health crisis caused by COVID-19 and its effects resonate deeply in our society, including education and - by extension - the recognition of foreign qualifications. These issues are at the core of UNESCO's mandate to promote equitable access to quality higher education for all. This mission is also at the heart of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), which remains relevant today.

The Tokyo Convention is how UNESCO's promotes fair and transparent recognition of qualifications in the Asia-Pacific region. It complements the Lisbon Convention in Europe and new Global Convention. Together, the Conventions are important because they set the rules for higher education and training providers. They put students first – with the aim to ensure all learners have access to fair recognition of their qualifications.

Enacted in Feb 2018, the Tokyo Convention on recognition in the Asia-Pacific region has 8 Parties, which is still too few. We need more countries involved to ensure that all students have access to fair recognition in Asia-Pacific. We all need better access to authoritative information including through the new Asia-Pacific Network of National Information Centre's (APPNIC).

Today is the first of many next steps to explore challenges and new opportunities related to recognition of qualifications, including equal treatment of online learning as well as other forms of formal or non-formal learning. UNESCO's APNNIC and the RecoASIA project partners can work together to facilitate an important debate about mobility and the changing landscape of recognition.

We are here to listen and learn from experiences in Europe and within the Asia-Pacific region. Thank you again for joining us and we look forward to a fruitful discussion.

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Libing Wang, PhD

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