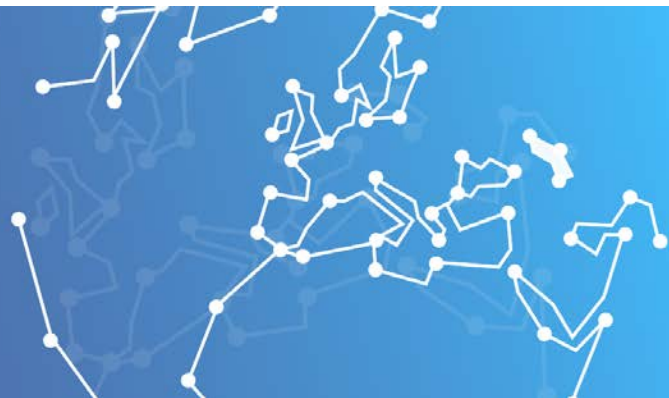




Groningen
Declaration
Network

PARIS 2018
18-20 April

The Age of Opportunity:
Privacy, Trust and Learner Mobility



'AFTER THE EVENT' NEWSLETTER

7TH ANNUAL MEETING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Seventh Annual GDN Meeting in Paris was a major success and attracted new attendees, while it also welcomed back friends from previous gatherings. This reinforced the network's relevance for the furtherance of global learners mobility today. Such success could not have been achieved without the overwhelming support from our charter entities, sponsors, supporters, participants, and signatories, with many of the aforementioned wearing several if not all of these hats.

This year's theme was "The Age of Opportunity: Privacy, Trust, and Learner Mobility," which was explored through presentations on an array of topics, from Digital Technologies in French Education, to the GDPR and Higher Education Privacy Standards. While significant challenges still exist related to learner mobility, they can be addressed through greater collaboration on a global scale.

The 2018 Meeting Report highlighting the sessions, speakers, and takeaways is now Available in this After the Event issue.

We thank you for your continued support, and look forward to welcoming you all to the Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla- UPAEP in Puebla, Mexico at our 2019 Annual Meeting.

Thank you!

Neil Robinson, President/Chair, Board of Directors - Groningen Declaration Network



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GDN 7TH ANNUAL MEETING

A Message from the President and Executive Director

Dear participant,

As you read this newsletter, we hope fond memories of our memorable Seventh Groningen Declaration Network's Annual Meeting that was held at the Université Pierre et Marie Curie (aka Université Paris VI, since this year: Sorbonne Université) in Paris, France remain. Now in its seventh year and its second as a Foundation, the GDN has proved its dedication to the development of more opportunities for participation and engagement amongst our network's supporters. This year's theme of "The Age of Opportunity: Privacy, Trust and Learner Mobility," served as a conduit for that kind of participation and engagement, particularly when it came to the moderated plenary panel discussions. The meeting proved to be very successful, as demonstrated by the fact that fifteen new signatories, including the Ministries of (Higher) Education of France, Malta and the Netherlands joined the GDN, with the German Federal Ministry of Education not signing but actively participating as did the other ministerial representatives, against the backdrop of 165 participants from 26 countries attending; a record thus far.

This newsletter contains a lot of material about the 2018 meeting, such as the Executive Summary, the Evaluation Report, pictures taken during the event, and personal impressions by a number of participants. These will hopefully mirror the rich discussions and networking, and summarize to you some of the major trends to watch in the coming year. In addition to the proceedings and impressions of the 2018 meeting, you will also find the annual report for 2017-2018, mid-term vision and goals as set by the Board of Directors. Also, you will find appreciations for the GDN board members that rotated off the board (Navin Vasudev and Tom Black) or who took on another title (Victoriano Giralt, Inaugural President, turned Immediate Past President).

We add a number of new developments and projects that we are actively involved in and initiate, with this newsletter, debates – by posting an article written by one of our participants that may hopefully generate feedback and discussion. In this issue, Public Blockchains are considered by Andy Dowling. Please feel free to disagree and send in your views, as long as you subscribe to the rule that all opinions expressed in Andy's article reflect Andy's own views, not necessarily ours – and we will report back on the discussion next time.

From the above, we hope it will be clear that we intend this newsletter to stimulate amongst participants in the Groningen Declaration Network. We would be more than happy to hear your views and consider your suggestions. Be a part of the conversation and feel free to contribute, be it an article, volunteering to be on one of the GDN Task Forces, or seeking greater involvement through our Board and Task Force processes.

By way of conclusion, let us return to the message we presented at the end of our meeting in Paris: participation in the "Groningen Network" not only pays off through the important international pilots and projects that are initiated during our annual meetings, but also through the web of networks we continuously create through these outlets, permitting IT developers, service providers, government leaders, policy makers, and decision makers from a wide range of disciplines to interact and to stimulate innovation. By doing that, the potential for multidisciplinary collaboration and thus, support for global human capital mobility and life-long learning may lead to their becoming a reality.

Thank you and enjoy the newsletter!

Neil Robinson, President
Herman de Leeuw, Executive Director,
Groningen Declaration Network Office



ANNUAL REPORT MAY 2017 - APRIL 2018

As approved by the GDN Board of Directors at its videoconference meeting on 18 July 2018

This annual report will be the first GDN annual report to use benchmarks to mark progress made.

At the GDN Fall Board of Directors Meeting, in October 2017, the Board of Directors decided on three external and three internal mid-term goals, covering the period May 2017 - April 2022. Those goals will permit us to check how much progress has been made, as the goals will be used here as benchmarks – what has been achieved, what not, and how to proceed from here?

The goals will first be listed here, after which the attainments will be presented, starting with the internal goals.

External goals

1. The GDN is acknowledged for providing academic, practitioner and consultative expertise to lead the global adoption of strategies and tactics towards the Digital Learner Data Ecosystem.
2. The GDN will be the umbrella organization with a critical mass of active participants to facilitate collaboration, engagement and synergies among regional and global organizations and initiatives.
3. The GDN partners with organizations and projects on all continents aligned to the goal of advancing education and mobility, through regional or segmented hubs that encourage inclusive participation from countries, regions, developing nations and other stakeholders.

Internal goals

1. The GDN has transitioned into a professionally managed not-for-profit organization with an established Secretariat and a clear action plan.
2. The GDN has established a fundraising capacity that ensures financial and resource sustainability.
3. The GDN has assembled a constituency of expert volunteers, supported and overseen by a diverse, effective board with defined responsibilities.

To access the full report, [click here](#).

MEMORABLE MOMENTS FROM PARIS



*Thanks to The PIE News for the use of the images



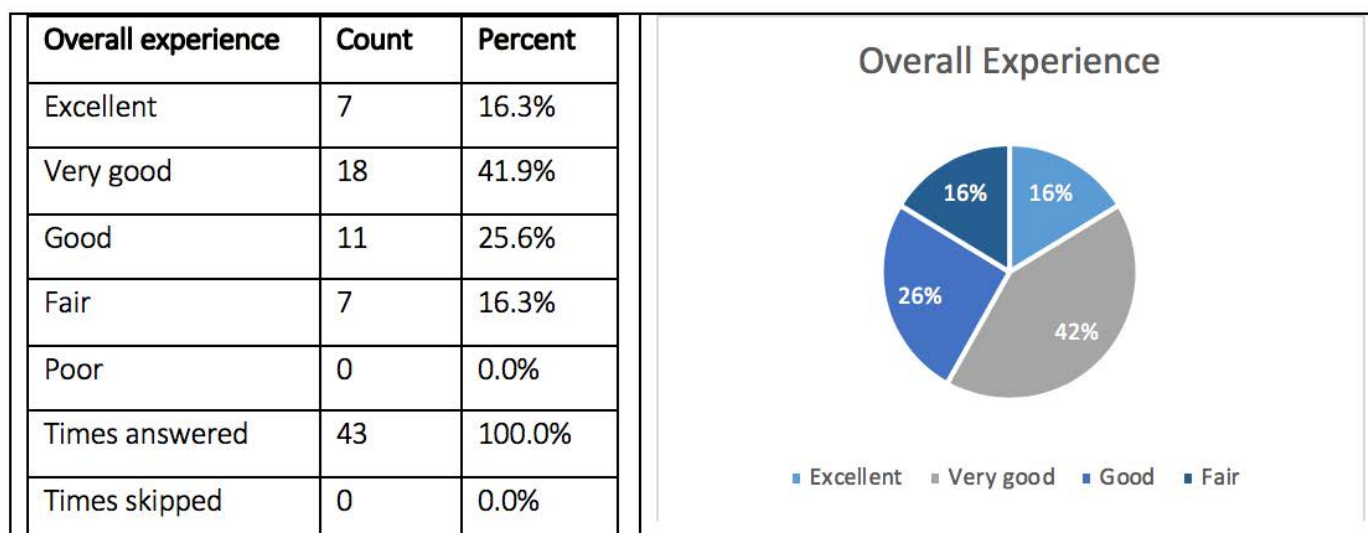
EVALUATION REPORT

Seventh Annual Meeting - Paris, France

The evaluation report reproduces the feedback received from one third of the attendees at the 2018 annual Groningen Declaration Network meeting.

We value this feedback and acknowledge the challenges identified in relation to the 2018 Annual Meeting. The GDN Board of Directors will address the issues raised in preparation for the 2019 AM in Puebla, Mexico, especially the top four issues identified in this report: more timely start of the annual planning and organization cycle; better provision of information to attendees and the network in the run-up to the AM; reconsideration of the formula and ingredients that go into the AM programme; and last but not least, provision of flawless digital services during the AM!

How would you rate your overall experience at the Groningen Declaration Meeting 2018 in Paris?



To access the evaluation report, [click here](#).

Thank you for your continued commitment to and support for the GDN - it is much appreciated as we continue to build our globally networked community!

-Neil Robinson, President, Groningen Declaration Network

-Herman de Leeuw, Executive Director, GDN Office

Thanks for the conference,
interesting and well
organized.
-Hilligje van 't Land,
Secretary-General, IAU

GDN 8TH ANNUAL MEETING

Dear delegates of the 8th Groningen Declaration Network
Annual Meeting 2019:



It is a great pleasure for me to greet you and to give you the most cordial welcome to UPAEP, to the city of Puebla and to Mexico, for the 8th Groningen Declaration Network Annual Meeting, to be held from April 24 to 26, 2019 at our university.

UPAEP was born in 1973 as a project of the Puebla society, led by a group of businessmen and students who in their time decided to make a difference and undertake, for the sake of university freedom and autonomy, a new project that crystallizes in what today is an institution committed to the search and dissemination of truth, which wants to be consistent with Christian humanism. Therefore, today as yesterday, it is committed to the training of professionals who are a factor of change and transformation in order to build the Common Good.



Our world demands from university students to act locally, with a global perspective. In this sense, UPAEP has been a pioneer in the internationalization of its university community, based on a vision of interculturality that entails the valorization of the national culture to share and enrich it with other cultures. In this line, and due to its spirit and international vocation, UPAEP has created partnerships and collaborative programs with internationally recognized institutions such as the University of Notre Dame, New York University, Oklahoma State University, MIT, Harvard University, and many more around the world, offering today a number of student mobility, teaching and research programs, as well as professional internships abroad, in addition to 84 double-degree programs at prestigious universities around the globe.

Puebla is a city with almost 490 years of history, founded on April 16, 1531, as a place of rest and replenishment between the port of Veracruz and the great Tenochtitlan, during the time of the Spanish colony. Being the fourth most important city in the country, after Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey, with a population of almost 3 million in its metropolitan area, the city of Puebla combines history and



pre-Columbian and colonial culture with development and modernity, being internationally recognized for its splendid gastronomy and hospitality and, more recently, as a "university city," due to the large number of higher education institutions that have been established in it and the number of students from all over the country and other parts of the world that reside here. In addition, Puebla was recognized by the Wall Street Journal as the second most interesting city to visit in 2018 (leaving only the Faroe Islands in first position), in the article "Where to travel in 2018", signed by journalist Christian L. Wright.



Thanks to its strategic geographical location, the city of Puebla is an ideal venue to take and integrate the Groningen Declaration Network vision to all of Latin America, to make learning throughout life a global reality, since Mexico, being part of Mesoamerica, serves as a natural bridge between Latin America and North America and, due to its Hispanic origin, also with Europe.

Finally, the innovative and technological vocation of UPAEP, together with the Digital Strategy promoted by the Mexican Government, make the moment ideal for Mexico to lead in Latin America the transformation towards a global education. Greetings with affection on behalf of the UPAEP community, hoping to receive you all in the 8th Groningen Declaration Network Annual Meeting, which we are preparing with enthusiasm to make it memorable.

EMILIO JOSE BAÑOS ARDAVIN, PhD, PRESIDENT, UPAEP -
Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Puebla, Mexico

GDN MAKING WAVES



GDN joins newly established EU Graduate Tracking Experts Group

GDN Executive Director Herman de Leeuw and Director Rick Torres have been selected as experts for the newly established EU Commission expert group on tracking graduates. The expert group will meet periodically throughout the year to monitor its implementation. The resolutions, recommendations and opinions have been released in the Official Journal which is available, [here](#).



GDN Highlighted in Forbes Magazine

Derek Newton, writing for Forbes, explains in the issue of Monday 17 September how the GDN and Blockchain may impact student mobility

While the [Groningen Declaration](#) sounds like something economists throw jello over at the Nobel Prize cafeteria, or maybe the next Bourne sequel, it's actually an agreement to work toward creating easily accessible, highly transportable and secure education credentials.

The idea rests on four pillars.

The first is that accessing transcripts, the existing records of academic achievement, is labor intensive and takes time.

The second is that a transcript has limited information, usually only a course title and a grade.

Third, with personal and population mobility, accessing academic records with common standards, any time and in any place will be essential.

And finally, there's an assumption that, going forward, learning won't end when you graduate high school or college, it will be a life-long endeavor of upgrading job skills and staying current with evolving technology.

For that last purpose, ongoing education is likely to cross institutions, geography and significant amounts of time. If, for example, three years ago you paid for, went to, and completed a program in computer coding at Dev Bootcamp, which closed in 2017, showing that accomplishment to an employer or future education provider could be a challenge.



More from Forbes Magazine

So, the theory is, future education credentials will need to hold more information, be accessible by many people while being both secure and verifiable – things that seem well suited for a blockchain-type solution.

So far, nearly 100 schools and education organizations around the world, including about 40 in the United States, have signed on to Groningen.

American signers include Duke, Johns Hopkins, Stanford and the University of Texas, Austin.

Earlier this year, the Groningen conference in Paris featured [multiple presentations](#) specifically on blockchain. One presentation was by [“Blockchain in Education”](#) a group assembled at the University of Groningen to run an [ongoing pilot](#) with 20 international college students using blockchain to access and verify their credentials. MIT (MIT Media Lab) has already developed mobile credential storage app called Blockcerts and used it, in 2017, to issue blockchain-secure digital diplomas to graduates of some of their programs. And one college, the University of Nicosia (UNIC) in Cyprus, is already offering full blockchain credentials for all their programs.



GDN Task Force on Cross-Border Enrolment and Student Loans: Announcing Pilot DUO - National Student Clearinghouse on Enrolment Verification

The Taskforce on cross-border enrolment and student loan verification will start a new pilot in 2018-2019. After a first exchange of ideas during the GDN meeting in Paris, DUO and the National Student Clearinghouse have started making plans for a pilot on enrolment verification of Dutch students attending Higher Education Institutions in the US. Hoping to simplify current verification processes, the pilot will focus on exchanging data on enrolment and degrees acquired by Dutch students, thus making life easier for students, educational institutions and DUO alike. Due to the strict GDPR regulations, both parties are currently drafting a data protection addendum to go with the service agreement, to comply with all data protection regulations. First verifications are planned for November 2018. You can expect an update and presentation about the results at the GDN meeting in Puebla Mexico in 2019!

INITIATING DEBATE - DISCUSSION PAPER FROM GDN PARTICIPANT

As already announced above, the GDN Newsletter welcomes articles written by our participants with an eye to generating feedback and discussion.

In this issue, Public Blockchains are considered by Andy Dowling.

Please feel free to disagree and send in your views, as long as you subscribe to the rule that all opinions expressed in Andy's article reflect Andy's own views, not necessarily ours – and we will report back on the discussion next time.



What Does Blockchain Add to the Digital Credentialing Space?

For over 15 years, vendors and education providers around the world have successfully implemented solutions to enable the certification, exchange, and verification of digital academic records, yet blockchain is now being perceived as a perfect solution to digital credentialing.

The Digitary team dived into the details of the blockchain architecture to understand how blockchain works and how it is being used to secure digital academic credentials. The resulting thoughts and key observations are shared with the GDN network in an effort to progress the conversation around the application of blockchain to securing academic credentials.

To access the full Digitary publication, [click here](#).

I just want to say, I had a very fruitful network event and although it was my first time still good to see some familiar faces. Thank you. This network is very international indeed, I hope it will kept this way and good to join forces worldwide about the topics that will be very useful for future generations.

-Ceren Genc, StudyGroup, Netherlands.

Greetings from CSCSE! We sincerely thank you warm welcome and professional handling of our participation as well as the consolidated contents of this year's conference. It was a big success. The conference was and insightful and interesting. CSCSE values such network and wish to carry out further possible cooperation with you. Thank you all and wish to meet you up all next year.

-Liping Chen, CSCSE, China

GDN IN THE SPOTLIGHT



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Outstanding contribution to the industry - finalists

▶ Herman de Leeuw – Executive Director, Groningen Declaration Network, Netherlands

Herman de Leeuw's idea for revolutionising international education is simple: provide a means for students and providers to share academic credentials. But with most simple ideas, the execution is difficult.

Over the past decade, through the Groningen Declaration Network, Herman has managed what many have not. Navigating across borders, education systems and governments, GDN is the largest network of authenticated student data. His knack for connecting the right people at the right time is seeing significant gains in the space and seen the creation of a secure, scalable system for storing and transferring verified academic information.

Herman de Leeuw, Groningen Declaration Network, Netherlands

Herman de Leeuw helped set up the Groningen Declaration Network. He is a true visionary, and deeply persistent in his unwavering commitment to help define the future of "digital student data portability". The organisation is now recognised by UNESCO, the World Bank and OECD.

Herman de Leeuw is a Dutch civil servant whose vision is the secure global portability of academic credentials.



SPECIAL THANKS

Acknowledging Outstanding Service to GDN Board

I would like to thank Victoriano Giralt, our Inaugural President, for his tireless work and energy. In close cooperation with our Executive Director, Herman de Leeuw, their shared vision of a global Network is increasingly coming to pass. Victoriano will be known to many of you, and I am sure you would want to join me in thanking him, wishing him well and catching-up with him next April 2019 in Puebla.

I would also like to acknowledge outgoing Directors Tom Black – who delivered the inaugural keynote at our Founding Conference in 2012 – and Navin Vasudev, who will remain co-chair of the GDN Task Force on Verification Policies and Best Practices.

-Neil Robinson, President/Chair, Board of Directors - Groningen Declaration Network

GLOBAL EVENTS

29 - 30 November, Groningen, University of Groningen: Blockchain, Public Trust, Law and Governance

The Blockchain is regarded by many as the ultimate 'trust machine' which is deemed to replace traditional banking systems, land registers, public record systems, and even conventional voting systems. Distributed-ledger technology has the potential to address the trust, transparency, and bureaucracy challenges that several public bodies currently face. Furthermore, this technology creates room for new collaboration opportunities between governments and citizens. It verifies close to real time transactions, simplifies regulatory compliance, promises efficiency gains through the reduction of intermediaries, and reduces the risks of fraud and cybercrime.

Throughout the world, multiple governments are experimenting with blockchain in different areas. However, it remains a black box to many citizens, public bodies, and companies. This in itself raises concern for areas where democratic processes are essential to create legitimacy. Additionally, many question whether the technology is stable and secure over the long-run, if total transparency is desirable for all kinds of public services, whether it is scalable enough or consumes too much energy, what its social impact is, whether existing legal frameworks are challenged by this system, and how the technology and its users can be "fixed" if mistakes occur. Hence, the 'trust machine' has not been able to conquer the minds and hearts of many skeptical public and private actors. This conference seeks to shed light on these questions. For more info regarding the conference, [click here](#).

24-26 October, ePIC 2018, Paris: Making Informal Recognition Visible

The 16th International Conference on Recognition, Trust, Identity and their technologies—Open Badges, ePortfolios, Social Networks and Blockchains will this year be held at the Centre de Recherche Interdisciplinaire 10 Rue Charles V, 75004 Paris, France. More information [here](#).

17 - 19 October, San Francisco, PESC Fall Data Summit

PESC will host its 2018 Fall Data Summit on Oct. 17 - 19th in San Francisco and the theme will be Inspiring Digitalization and Mobility Across Education and Employment. focusing on those actors that interact with students directly: Registrars, SIS Vendors, Application Centers and Credential Evaluators.

Keynote speaker:

Creating Next Generation Mobility: Exploring the Possible"

Charmaine Hack

Chair, ARUCC Groningen & Student Mobility Steering Committee;

Past-President, ARUCC; Registrar, Ryerson University

The PESC FALL 2018 DATA SUMMIT includes a range of topics all targeting: access, integration and implementation of data systems; maintenance and promotion of data exchange standards; open, community-driven development and innovation of technology; data privacy, data quality, data management, and data collection & reporting; mobility and overall interoperability; & other key factors that drive global education data systems development and technology.

More info available [here](#).

18 October, Barcelona, ERASMUS going Digital

The 3rd Erasmus Going Digital conference will focus on illustrating the impact of Erasmus Without Paper, the Erasmus+ App as well as the Online Learning Agreement and in addition to getting to know the latest digital tools participants can also take part in workshops and share best practices regarding the digitisation of Higher Education Administration.

The event is hosted on Oct. 18th by the University of Barcelona (Spain) in cooperation with the Catalan Association of Public Universities. More information [here](#).

1 - 4 October, TAICEP Annual Meeting, Philadelphia

This year's TAICEP conference will be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton Philadelphia City Center. Pre-conference workshops will be held on Monday, October 1, 2018, and conference sessions will be on Tuesday (full day), Wednesday (full day) and Thursday (half day), October 2-4, 2018. More information to follow [here](#).

Past Events



11 - 14 September, 30th annual EAIE Conference, Geneva

The European Association for International Education (EAIE) hosted its 30th annual meeting in Geneva, Switzerland the 11-14 of September 2018. One session of particular interest was Session 06.02, "How digital student data drives recognition (and the other way around)".

Topics from the session include admissions, accreditation and mobility. Herman de Leeuw, who submitted the proposal presented at the session, representing the GDN.



7 September, PIEoneer Award Event, London

The PIEoneer Awards 2018 - London, Friday, 7th September 2018 - Celebrating innovation

and achievement in international education. This year, Herman de Leeuw, Executive

Director of the GDN ended up as one of three finalists for the 2018 PIEoneer Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Industry. Join us in congratulating him on this great achievement!



7 September, Espoo (FI) EMREX workshop on ELMO

EMREX enables the exchange of academic achievement information in a standardized ELMO format across border in Europe and beyond.

A Workshop hosted by CSC was held on Sept. 7th 2018 in Espoo (FI).

The objective of this workshop was to prepare the ELMO format to support the provision of Diploma Supplement in a machine-readable, "digitalized" format.

The further development of ELMO to include the Diploma Supplement structure to format is part of the EMREX User Group Plan for Year 2018.

More information about the workshop and the ELMO - Diploma Supplement proposal can be found [here](#).



6 September, T3 Innovation Network

The T3 Innovation Network is exploring the emerging technologies and standards in the talent marketplace to better align student, workforce, and credentialing data with the needs of the new economy. It is an initiative by the US Chamber of Commerce and Lumina Foundation.

T3 is comprised of four workgroups organized to address convergence challenges and opportunities and discuss possible pilot projects using Web 3.0 Technologies, defined as semantic web standards (e.g., linked data), distributed ledger technology (e.g., blockchain), artificial intelligence, machine learning, and large-scale data analytics.

Here is a summary of the current work, presented at a meeting hosted by LinkedIn on Sept. 6th 2018.

- Work Group 1: Stakeholder Use Cases for Achieving Breakthrough Innovations (report)
- Work Group 2: Exploring Sustainable Data Standards Convergence (report)
- Work Group 3: Developing and Analyzing Competencies (report)
- Work Group 4: New Architectures and Uses of Linked Individual-Level Data (report)

More info and reports, [click here](#).

Several of the GDN members are actively involved in this work including, PESC, NSC and Digitary.



26-31 June, 70th NAFSA Annual Conference, Philadelphia

At the 70th annual NAFSA conference held in Philadelphia last June, the GDN was represented in the program with a presentation about the importance of digital student records for international student mobility. The session 'Government funding in international education: An emerging view from Europe' was presented by Cheryl Darrup-Boychuck (INTCAS), Jelger de Boer (DUO), Frank Blalark (Duke University), and Sarah Kiley (Parchment) – representing four GDN signatories - and was well received. As well as providing insight in the complex processes associated with international student mobility and cross-border data exchange, the session focused on the work GDN is doing to facilitate mobility for students worldwide.

GLOBAL NEWS



DigiRec - Consortium of ENIC- NARICs to Look into Use of Digital Data for Purpose Recognition

Right from the start of the Groningen Declaration Network, credential evaluation and diploma recognition were identified as pivotal processes. It is the adoption of digital data as meeting the requirements of evaluation agencies and recognition centers that will effectively drive the global adoption of digital student data as the preferred source of evidence for documenting learning and skills of globally mobile learners. And it is precisely that that the DigiRec consortium will explore. The GDN has been involved in this consortium since the beginning, serving on the DigiRec Steering Committee. The consortium is composed of the President of the ENIC Bureau, the President of the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee, EMREX and the Executive Director of the Groningen Declaration Network, and the following ENIC-NARIC representatives:

- ENIC Canada
- NARIC France
- NARIC Italy
- NARIC Netherlands (coordinator)
- NARIC Poland
- NARIC Sweden

For more information, see [here](#).



Core EWP Objectives Included in Paris Communiqué

The core objectives of Erasmus without Paper (EWP) have been included in the Paris Communiqué, which has been signed by the Ministers responsible for higher education. This major step towards promoting student and graduate mobility along with commitment to supporting higher education institutions has been considered fundamental for EU member states. To read the full text, [click here](#).



SAQA - National Qualifications Framework Amendment Bill

In June 2018, the South African Parliament officially filed a bill named, the National Qualifications Framework Amendment Bill, which aims at addressing the challenges present regarding fraudulent or misrepresented qualifications. The bill will grant the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) the power to create and maintain registers for professional designations, along with misrepresented and fraudulent qualifications. For more information regarding the new bill, [click here](#).



South African DoHE: SAQA Register to Name and Shame Misrepresentation by Institutions and Individuals

The South African Department of Higher Education and Training has proposed naming and shaming individuals claiming fake qualifications in the online public register administered by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). The measures are contained in the draft National Qualifications Framework amendment bill brought before Parliament, back in June. This response, which aims to combat institutions that offer false qualifications and individuals who fake or misrepresent their accomplishments, may answer the problems employers and education institutions are facing. For full article, [click here](#).



ARUCC Groningen & Student Mobility Project

The Project involves creating a national platform for Canada that facilitates student data exchange between provinces, territories and trusted organizations around the world. It seeks to realize many benefits for student mobility including enhancing service to students and post-secondary institutions.

The project is incubated by the ARUCC's Task Force Groningen.
For more info, [click here](#).



My eEquals Close to Completing Roll-Out to all ANZ HEIs

The My eEquals project launched at the GDN Annual Conference in 2017 has completed the roll-out to all Australian and New Zealand Universities. Many of the 47 will be issuing digital credentials in the next few months.



Bahamas to Release National Platform for Digital Certificates Using Blockchain Technology

The Bahamas is the first country in the Caribbean and Latin America to implement a national credentialing system using blockchain technology. The government successfully completed a pilot project, Bahamas Blockcerts, which will radically improve the national system of creating, issuing, viewing and verifying national certificates of varied types. Longterm, this could include training certificates, academic diplomas and degrees, business license and tax compliance certificates, and a host of other national credentials.



"Digital Takeways" from Paris Communiqué

New Europass decision and Digital Education Action Plan

The European Higher Education Area Ministerial Conference was held in Paris in late May. This bi-yearly event marks the peak of Educational policies in Europe, through the release of a Communiqué which is a culmination of a series of satellite political decisions, including the New Europass and the Digital Education Action Plan.

The New Europass Decision

The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union adopted the Decision for the so-called "New Europass" project (read from p. 15). The new text introduces a couple of things relevant for GDN:

- the explicit mention of Open Standards
- the new Europass Online platform and web-based tools (should be released by end of 2019).

The Ministerial Communiqué

One of the four measures adopted by the Ministers speaks to the digitalization of the Diploma Supplement:

- Revised Diploma Supplement, with a recommendation for its adoption in identical form in the respective frameworks of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and Europass

(From the communiqué text)

"We approve the proposed revised Diploma Supplement and commit to working for its adoption in identical versions within the respective frameworks of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and Europass. To further promote student and graduate mobility, we welcome and support initiatives such as the digitalisation of the Diploma Supplement, and commit to support higher education institutions to pursue further student data exchange in a secure, machine-readable and interoperable format, in line with data protection Legislation."

The Digital Education Action Plan

The Digital Education Action Plan (Action 3), adopted recently by the European Commission, announces a technical framework for digitally signed qualifications, to be implemented through the New Europass. This is the bit where we the use of Blockchain technologies will be explored and where we should try to make our voice heard.



Cross Border Blockchain for diploma data in the EU, Also known as: a network of trust for Education.

Belgium and The Netherlands, in cooperation with colleagues of Croatia, France, Italy, Malta and Norway, have recently submitted a **use case** as 'Network of trust for education aka Cross-border Blockchain for Diploma Data in the EU' for the Call for Ideas of the EU blockchain partnership.

The project aims to create a blockchain to exchange diploma data between diploma owners and institutions across the EU. The aim is to create an open ecosystem that puts the student or citizen first and offers the potential to connect other partners, both inside and outside education.

Within the EU, many Member States are actively exploring the potential of Blockchain to provide a decentralised, transparent, validated and indelible management of student/citizen diploma data (diploma and diploma supplements if available). This can make it considerably easier to start a new study programme in another Member State or to apply for an interesting job inside or outside the country. In this way, student mobility within the EU can be facilitated and increased.

In order to achieve a sustainable solution and avoid fragmentation, the issue should be tackled at the EU level. For this reason, the Netherlands and Belgium (Flanders & Wallonia) have contacted other partners within fellow EU Member States who are working on similar initiatives and are interested to form a coalition-of-the-willing.

At the moment of submitting the use case, the following partners are involved:

- Belgium: Agency for Higher Education, Adult Education, Qualifications and Study Grants (AHOVOKS) and Académie De Recherche Et d'Enseignement Supérieur (ARES)
- Croatia: Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE)
- France: Direction Interministérielle De La Transformation Publique and Blockchain4Edu for the Directorate for Digital for Education
- Italy: Agenzia per l'Italia Digitale and Information Centre on Academic Mobility and Equivalence (CIMEA)
- Malta: Ministry for Education and Commonwealth Centre for Connected Learning
- The Netherlands: Education Executive Agency of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (DUO)
- Norway: The Norwegian Directorate for ICT and Joint Services in Higher Education and Research (UNIT)

In the coming months, the scope and planning of the use case will be developed by the partnership as well as the alignment with the various European stakeholders. Including a global vision and architecture of this network of trust for education and a view on the project funding from the EU and member states.

Intrigued? View the [animation video](#) of the use case.

For more information, please contact:

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Tessa Mouha, project manager, Flemish Agency for Higher Education, Adult Education, Qualifications and Study Grants (AHOVOKS), tessa.mouha@ond.vlaanderen.be or +32 2 553 87 91

Hennie Bulstra, Contact person for Blockchain developments, Education Executive Agency of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (DUO) hennie.bulstra@duo.nl or +31 6 5534 8601



Cheryl DarrupBoychuck Awarded NAFSA Annual Award for Outstanding Contributions to International Enrollment Management

2018 RECIPIENT



Cheryl DarrupBoychuck

INTCAS: INTelligent Communities Around Students

Cheryl DarrupBoychuck is U.S. director of institutional relations for INTCAS: INTelligent Communities Around Students. INTCAS connects the global education industry in a single platform to attract, recruit, and manage international students in a safe, compliant, and cost-effective manner. For 20 years prior to INTCAS, DarrupBoychuck managed all aspects of USjournal.com and its family of 16 multilingual domains. In her professional volunteer capacity, DarrupBoychuck co-created an online tool to help colleagues measure return on investment in international student

recruitment. She currently serves on two task forces for the Groningen Declaration and is on the editorial board for NAFSA's flagship magazine *International Educator*.

The conference was great. There were lots of useful sessions and it was a terrific networking opportunity. I think the GDN Annual Meeting Planning Committee did a wonderful job putting the program together. Thanks again for your hard work on this.

- Kathleen Massey, University of Lethbridge,

I was pleased with the conference
– I hope the Annual Meeting Planning Committee was. It seems like such a mammoth task to deal with and you deserve everyone's thanks for getting the job done.
- Kenneth Warren, Educational Perspectives, USA