

The International Symposium on CAMPUS Asia Common
Quality Assurance Standards Project, NIAD-QE

Advancing International Higher Education in Asia: Functions and Implications of Common Quality Assurance Standards

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Outline

1. Key topics and Roles of International Higher Education
2. International Higher Education Networks in Asia
3. Quality Assurance of Cross-Border Higher Education
4. Functions and Implications of Common Quality Assurance Standards

Key Topics in International Education



Roles of Education

—UNESCO (2021) International Commission on the *Futures of Education*

Rethinking Education towards 2050

- The place of education in wider society: strengthening a common public education
- The organization and governance of education: building inclusive educational ecosystems
- The content and methods of teaching and learning: fostering knowledge co-construction and pedagogical communing
- New times for teachers
- Key roles for higher education
- The urgency of global solidarity and international cooperation

- 1) to play in strengthening the knowledge and educational common.
- 2) the role of universities in teacher education
- 3) decisive significance of universities in producing research and enabling the circulation of knowledge, which both supports educational policymaking and strengthens the school and pedagogical innovation.

Roles of International Higher Education

—Platform for the Exchange and Co-creation of Knowledge

- A platform where intellectuals and ideas—carried along networks likened to the tracks of a moving vehicle—, come together to exchange, combine, and co-create new ways of thinking, fresh insights, emerging issues, shared goals, and potential answers



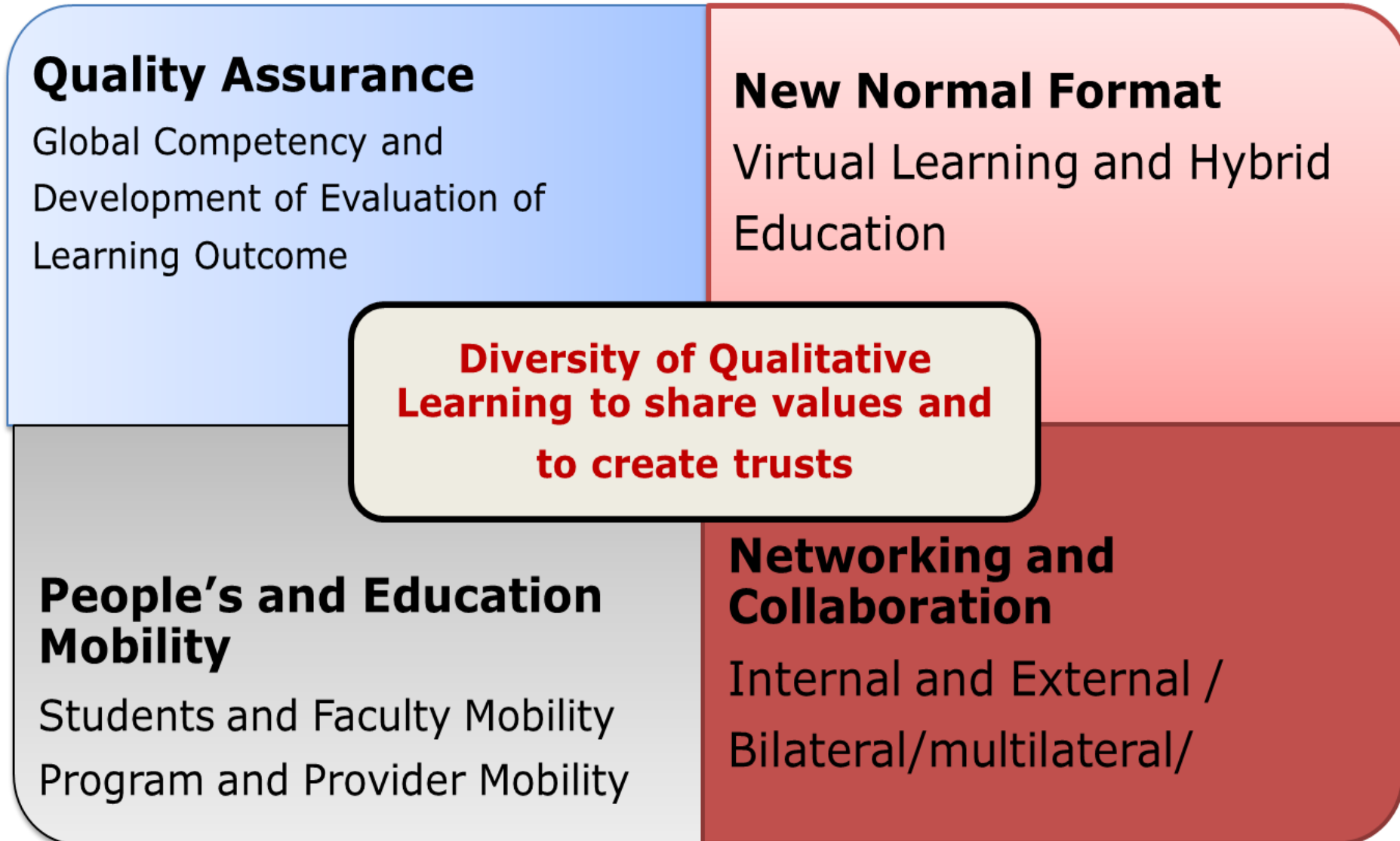
- Roles of international higher education

Creation of transcending boundaries of knowledge

An initiative characterized by academic interdisciplinarity and integrative scholarship, featuring:

- A knowledge framework with universal relevance that transcends geopolitical boundaries and systemic differences
- Connections that span across generations
- A commitment to sustainability

Key Issues for Transforming International Higher Education



Factors Contributing to the Emergence of International Higher Education Networks

1. Globalization and the Rise of the Knowledge Society

- The cross-border movement of information, talent, and technology is accelerating, compelling universities to enhance the quality of education and research through international collaboration.
- Addressing global challenges—such as environmental issues, infectious diseases, and social inequality—requires international knowledge sharing and cooperative efforts.

2. Competition for Talent and Strategic Development of Education

- Countries are striving to attract outstanding international students and researchers, advancing the creation of appealing educational environments through inter-university networks.
- In Asia in particular, economic growth has driven the expansion of higher education, fostering the development of regional higher education zones.

3. Growth in educational and study-abroad demand among the general public, supported by rising economic capacity

Factors Contributing to the Emergence of International Higher Education Networks (continued)

4. Technological Advancement and the Spread of Distance Education

- The proliferation of online international learning programs—such as COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning)—has enabled educational collaboration across physical boundaries.
- Advances in network technologies have contributed to the innovation of educational modalities and the promotion of international joint research.

5. International Educational Cooperation and Institutional Support

- Institutional frameworks such as quality assurance guidelines developed by UNESCO and OECD, as well as the Tokyo Convention on the recognition of qualifications in the Asia-Pacific region, have facilitated the formation of international networks.

International Guidelines for the Quality Assurance of Cross-Border Higher Education (by UNESCO and OECD, 2005)

The objective — — — to establish an international framework for quality assurance in cross-border higher education, in response to the growing provision of academic programs that transcend national boundaries.

Key Actions for Quality Assurance in Cross-Border Higher Education

1. System Development through Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

- Cooperation between receiving and providing countries
- Involvement of governments, HEIs, providers, student bodies, QA and accreditation agencies

2. Fair and Efficient Recognition of Degrees and Qualifications

- Transparent processes for academic and professional recognition
- Engagement of governments, HEIs, recognition bodies, and professional associations

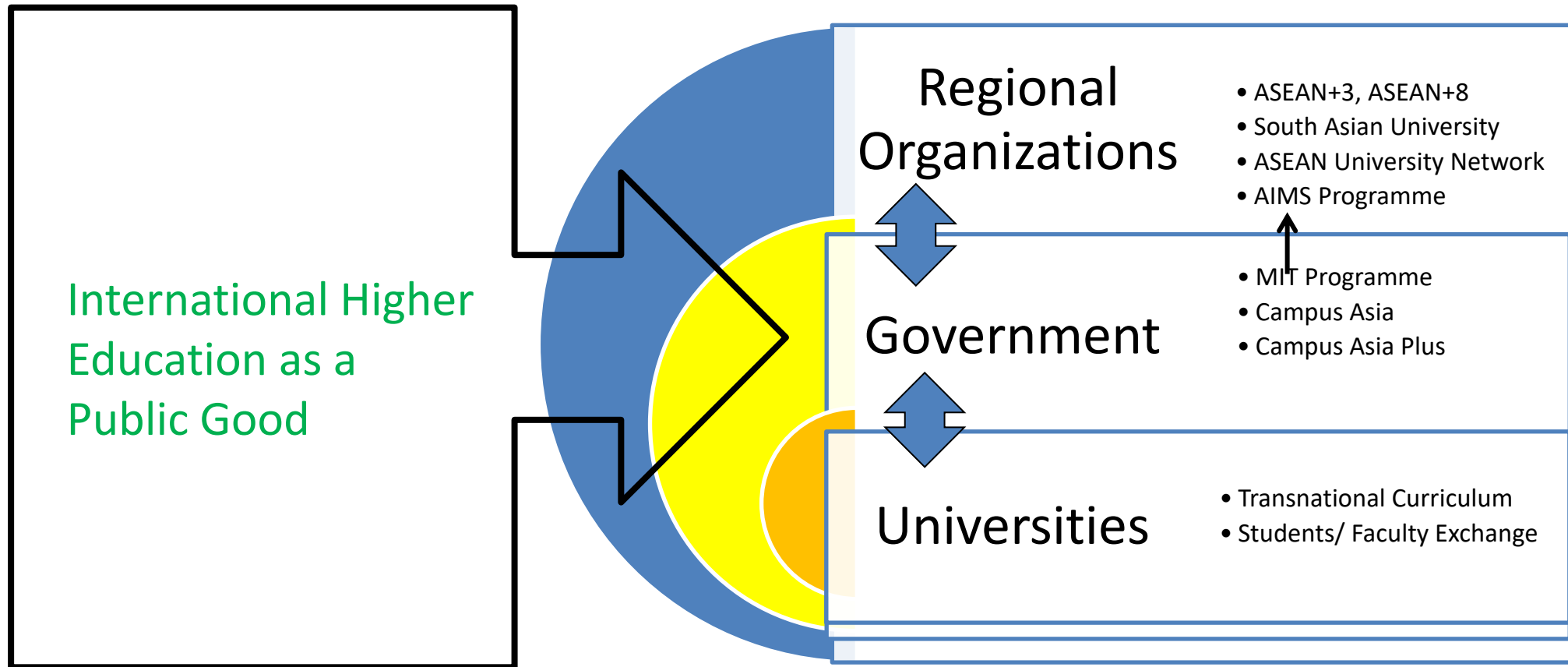
3. Strengthening Networks and Partnerships

- Building connections among domestic and international stakeholders
- Promoting collaboration and mutual support across sectors

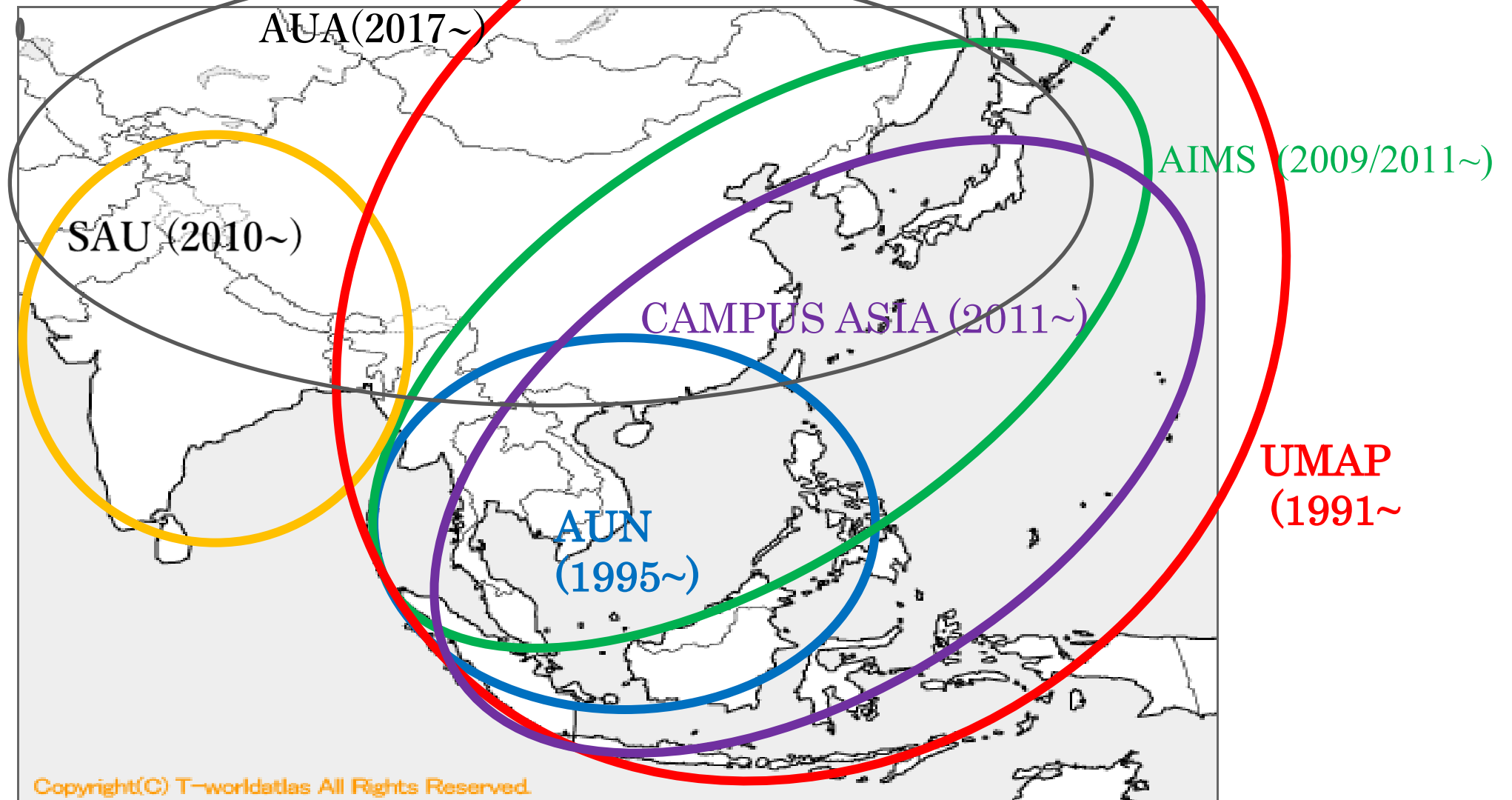
4. Clear and Reliable Information Provision

- Ensuring accessible and accurate information on program quality
- Shared responsibility among all stakeholders

Key Actors in Regional Collaboration Networks in Higher Education in the Asian Context



International Higher Education Networks in Asia



Functions of Regional Networks in Higher Education

1. Facilitation of International Mobility

Advancement of cross-border mobility for students and academic staff, both within and beyond regional boundaries, contributing to the diversification and globalization of higher education ecosystems.

2. Provision of Dialogic Platforms for Regional Issues

Establishment of inclusive spaces for learning and deliberation on transnational regional challenges, engaging not only students and faculty but also members of the broader public.

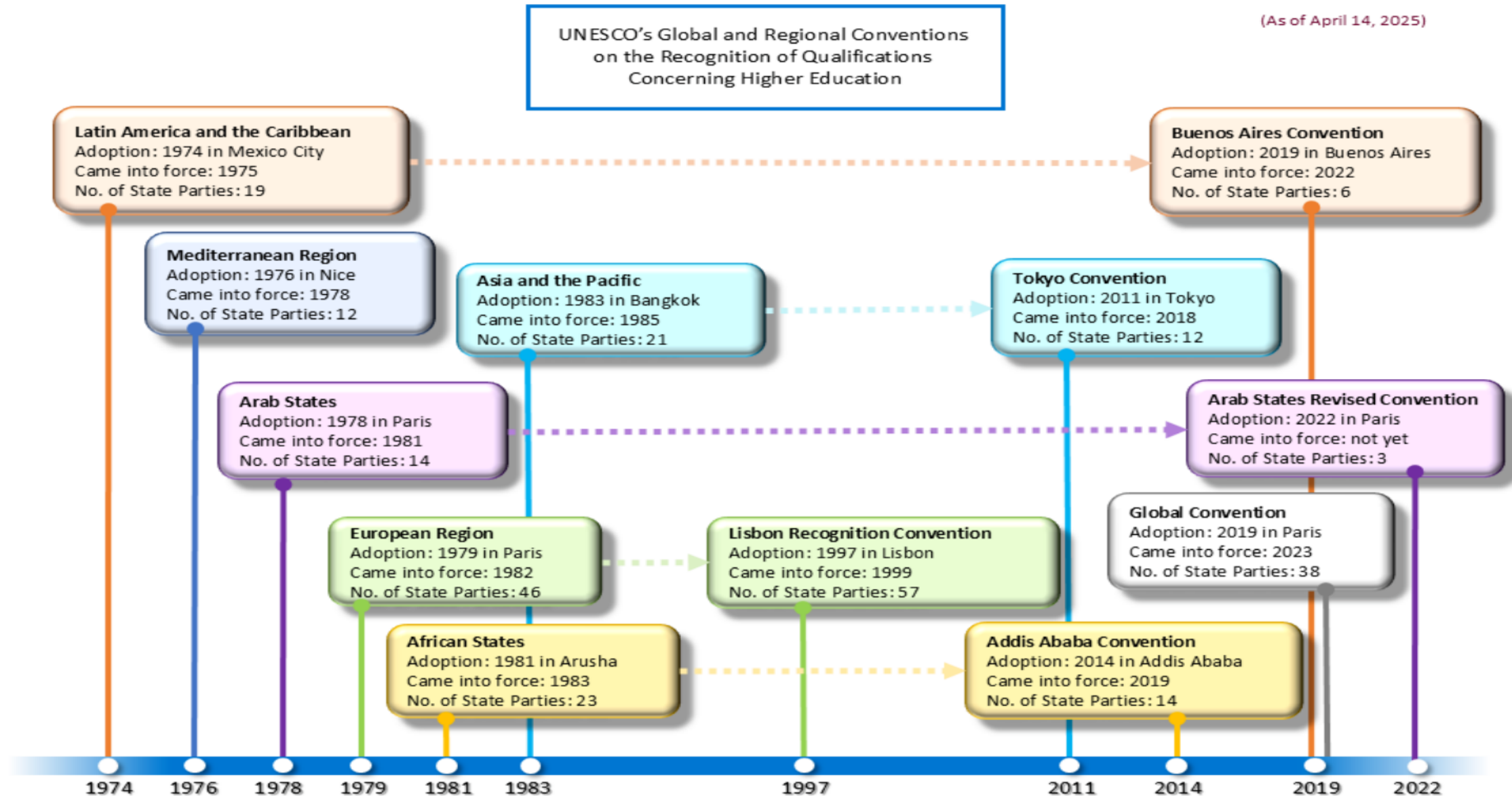
3. Cultivation of Shared Perspectives on Regional Communities

Promotion of mutual understanding and conceptual alignment regarding regional communities among individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.

4. Generation of New Academic Frameworks and Disciplines

Encouragement of innovative academic inquiry and the development of emerging fields within the context of international higher education collaboration.

UNESCO's Conventions on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education



Creating More Transparency for Enhancing People to People Connectivity

local context and political/socio-cultural differences



Inclusive and Balanced Mobility and Exchanges

comparability

compatibility

validation

recognition

Mutual Understanding
Sharing Values and Knowledge

International Collaboration in Quality Assurance of Higher Education in Asia

International Credit Transfer System

- UMAP Credit Transfer System (UCTS) for University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific
- ASEAN Credit Transfer System (ACTS) 2008

International Network of Quality Assurance

- International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE)
- Asia–Pacific Quality Network (APQN)
- ASEAN University Network- Quality Assurance Alliance (AUN-QA)

Qualification Framework

- ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework (AQAF)

Key Principles for Quality Assurance in Asian Higher Education Exchange

1. Diversity as a Foundation

- Context:
Asia hosts a wide range of exchange formats—double/joint degrees, semester-long study abroad, short-term intensive programs.
- Implication:
Quality assurance standards must be designed with diversity in mind.

2. Flexibility for Uncertain Times

- Context:
Pandemics and shifting social conditions create uncertainty.
Implication:
Standards should promote flexible teaching methods and support systems to ensure continuity in student learning.

3. Support for Sustainable QA Mechanisms

- Context:
University consortia are implementing internal quality assurance initiatives.
- Implication:
Standards should strengthen and enhance these mechanisms to support autonomous and sustainable quality improvement.

Functions of Common Quality Assurance Standards

Purpose:

To promote quality-assured inter-university exchange across Asia by offering a shared reference for program design and improvement.

Key Questions:

- What defines quality in exchange programs?
- How can that quality be sustained and enhanced?

Functions:

- Serve as a common benchmark for students, faculty, and stakeholders
- Encourage mutual understanding of educational systems
- Support ongoing collaboration and continuous improvement between partner universities

Fostering cooperation among organizations

—Asia-Pacific Network of National Information Centres (APNNIC)

- APNNIC is the official network of national information centres in the Asia-Pacific region concerning higher education since 2019.
- In line with the Tokyo Convention and international best practices, the network promotes fairness and transparency, which are necessary for high-quality recognition decisions to enable physical and virtual mobility.



Recent Geopolitical Impacts on Higher Education

Reconstructing Internationalization

Due to geopolitical tensions and cases of restricted international joint research and student exchange programs are increasing.

Balancing National Security and Academic Freedom

In specific fields such as artificial intelligence and quantum technologies, restrictions on accepting foreign researchers and regulations on technology transfer have been tightened for national security reasons.

Higher Education as a Regional Strategy

Higher education institutions are being incorporated into regional geopolitical strategies, with efforts underway to attract universities and establish research hubs in targeted areas.

Regional Disparities in Educational Opportunities

Changes in university location policies have led to growing disparities in access to higher education between urban and rural regions.

Implications of Common Quality Assurance Standards

- Traditionally, East Asia has lacked a shared regional foundation for quality assurance across countries.



Reference Guidelines Used in the Formulation of the Standards
Emphasizing Key Principles with Respect for National Contexts

- Diversity Across Countries
- Flexibility in Implementation
- Sustainability Through Collaboration (NIAD-QE, EQEA, KCUE)

- Enhancing shared perspectives and mutual trust through procedural engagement
- Designing a Framework of Standards



- Creating an international higher education zone: Provisionally titled "Asia for All" designed by Campus Asia



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FOR OTHERS, WITH OTHERS