This overview analyses various aspects of higher education, including: its massive expansion, the role of the private sector among the diverse providers, and international mobility. The aim is to identify the reasons for concern about higher education quality and the rationale for quality assurance and accreditation in the different regions of the world. This analysis is based on the latest statistics provided by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics. We then examine the existing situation in terms of the coverage and type of higher education accreditation that is practised in the different regions. The global issues discussed in the preceding section are then considered, as far as is possible, from regional perspectives, using the papers on regional perceptions of accreditation as a basis. We conclude with an analysis of the results of the Delphi poll. This poll was carried out by the GUNI Secretariat on specific aspects of international accreditation in the different regions of the world.

INTRODUCTION

The global issues discussed in previous papers also affect the different regions, albeit in a different way. Worldwide expansion in higher education was massive during the past decade. The challenge of this expansion is more critical to developing countries than developed ones. This has implications for quality. The role of the private sector in different forms (for profit, non-profit, denominational, philanthropic, publicly supported and self-financed) has implications for the control and assurance of relevance and quality in both developed and developing countries in the different regions of the world. Accreditation is one way of assuring quality and protecting stakeholders from unfair and irrelevant provision of higher education. This is equally important for higher education that is imported from abroad through onsite and online arrangements. Quality assurance through different mechanisms becomes an important social commitment for higher education institutions. Therefore, the practice of accreditation is essential. We will now discuss the expansion of higher education in different regions.

REGIONAL EXPANSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION: THE ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND CROSS-BORDER HIGHER EDUCATION

The Global Education Digest (2006) of the UNESCO Institute of Statistics provides us with the latest statistics on enrolment in regions and countries. Total enrolment in the world jumped from approximately 72 million in 1994 to 132 million in 2004. The gross enrolment ratio (GER) in 2004 was 24 per cent (see Statistical Appendix Table 5). Thus there was an 83 per cent increase in enrolment in a decade. This increase was widely disparate. The biggest increase occurred in the Arab States, with an average annual growth rate of approximately 12.83 per cent. This was followed by South and West Asia, with an average annual growth rate of 9 per cent (see Statistical Appendix Table 4). East Asia and the Pacific and Sub-Saharan regions enjoyed an average annual growth rate of 8.9 per cent each. Central and Eastern Europe had an average annual growth rate of 6.6 per cent. This was followed by Latin America and the Caribbean with 6.1 per cent. The regions of North America and Western Europe and Central Asia experienced the slowest growth at 1.68 and 1.10 per cent respectively (see Statistical Appendix Table 4). It is easy to understand the low increase in North America and Western Europe, as participation in this region has reached saturation. However, the limited increase in Central Asia is not so straightforward. Enrolment has decreased in several Central Asian countries since the break up of the former Soviet Union.

The growth in enrolment in the different regions has been shared by both the private sector and cross-border higher education, which is provided by foreign countries to developing countries, in particular. The biggest providers of cross-border education in 2004 were: the United States of America with 572,509 students from abroad, the United Kingdom with...
The role of the private sector is measured by the percentage of enrolment in this sector with respect to total enrolment. The indicator net flow rate (the number of inbound students coming from abroad minus the number of outbound students going abroad divided by total enrolment, expressed as a percentage) shows the relative dependence (when negative) or relative independence (when positive) on foreign higher education. The expansion, the role of the private sector and the net flow rate have clear implications for quality and accreditation. They can help dependent countries to negotiate for quality and also to improve upon it. We shall see below how these factors have affected each region separately.

**SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

Thirty-one countries reported on higher education enrolment. Total enrolment was 3.3 million. The region has the lowest participation rate. The regional average GER value was 5 per cent. It varied from a mere 1 per cent in Angola, Eritrea, the Gambia, Mozambique, Niger and the United Republic of Tanzania to a high of 17 per cent in Mauritius, followed by South Africa with 15 per cent and Nigeria with 10 per cent.

The regional average annual growth rate of enrolment was 8.9 per cent during the decade. The lowest value was 0.43 per cent in the Gambia with a GER of 1 per cent, followed by Malawi at 0.49 per cent with a GER of under 1 per cent, the Congo at 1.02 per cent with a GER of 4 per cent, and Madagascar at 1.6 per cent with a GER of 3 per cent. Twelve out of 31 countries had a growth rate of less than 5 per cent. Most of them, except South Africa which had a growth rate of 1.7 per cent, had suffered from either political or economic troubles. Therefore, there was obviously less emphasis on higher education. Comoros, which started with very low base, had the highest growth rate of 2.49 per cent. This was followed by Nigeria at 20 per cent. Ethiopia had a growth rate of 19.5 per cent, despite economic and political difficulties.

Thirteen countries in the region reported on the private sector’s share of enrolment. Botswana reported a 100 per cent share, which was the highest in all the reporting countries. This was followed by Rwanda at 43 per cent, Angola, Burundi and Mozambique with 32 per cent. The lowest share reported was 8 per cent in Madagascar and the Congo. It is important to note that the role of the private sector is also on the increase in the region (see Statistical Appendix Tables 4 and 5).

Forty-five countries reported on the number of outbound students. However, flow rates are only available for 21 countries. All but one had negative flow rates as could be expected. Rates varied from –7.3 per cent in the Republic of South Africa to –142.9 per cent in Comoros. Gambia had a rate of –79.2 per cent and Lesotho had a rate of –72.4 per cent. Only South Africa had a positive flow rate, that is, there were more inbound than outbound students. France is the most popular destination for 14 countries. However, in terms of the total number of inbound students from the region, it stands in fourth place. All of these 14 countries except for Mauritius are French speaking. Ten countries sent most of their outbound students to the USA. These were all English speaking countries. South Africa received the highest number of outbound students from seven countries. All of these countries were close neighbours. Portugal received the highest number of outbound students from five countries. These were all Lusophone (Portuguese speaking) countries. Belgium drew the largest number of outbound students from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, its former colonies. The United Kingdom received the highest number of students from Uganda and the Seychelles. Germany, Spain, India and Cameroon received the highest number of outbound students from one country each (see Statistical Appendix Table 6).

**THE ARAB STATES**

The Arab States region had a total enrolment of 6.5 million in 2004 and a regional average gross enrolment ratio of 21 per cent. The average annual growth rate was 12.8 per cent, which was the highest of all the regions. However, this growth was highly dispersed. It varied from 41 per cent in Morocco, with a gross enrolment ratio of 11 per cent, to a mere 1.6 per cent in Qatar, with a gross enrolment ratio of 18 per cent in 2004. The average annual growth rate was 11.85 per cent in Tunisia with a gross enrolment ratio of 26 per cent in 2003. This region has a high potential for growth in the near future.

This growth has been shared by the private sector, which is involved in varying degrees in the different countries. Nine out of the 20 countries that provided reports had a private sector. The Palestinian Autonomous Territories had the largest private sector with 58 per cent enrolment, followed by Lebanon with 49 per cent, Jordan with 37 per cent, Oman with 29 per cent and Egypt with 18 per cent. Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Morocco also had private sectors. However, they were much smaller: 9 per cent, 7 per cent, 6 per cent and 5 per cent respectively (see Statistical Appendix Tables 4 and 5).

In the Arab States region, 20 countries sent over 1000 students to study abroad. Twelve countries reported on the number of students incoming (inbound) to the region...
in 2004. Seven out of 12 had more outgoing students, while only five had more incoming students. The net flow had the highest negative values, quite understandably, in small countries like Djibouti (–159 per cent), Mauritania (–20 per cent) and Morocco (–13.1 per cent). Therefore, these countries were importing more higher education than they were exporting. The net inflow was also negative in the Palestinian Autonomous Territories (–4.4 per cent), Bahrain (–4.2 per cent) and Algeria (–2.7 per cent). Most of this higher education import came from developed countries such as France, which was the top destination for students from the following countries with the figures in parentheses giving the number of students: Algeria (22,250), Djibouti (1,517), Lebanon (4,671), Mauritania (984), Morocco (32,802), and Tunisia (9,748). The United Kingdom was the main recipient of students from Bahrain (871), Libya (1,221), Oman (1,495) and the United Arab Emirates (1,633). The United States received the highest number of students from Egypt (1,822), Jordan (1,853), Kuwait (1,846) and Saudi Arabia (3,521). Jordan occupied the top position among exporting countries for the Palestinian Autonomous Territories (4,845) and Syria (2,279). Saudi Arabia was the top destination for students from Yemen (2,797). Qatar (6.1 per cent), Jordan (4.8 per cent), the Lebanon (1.7 per cent), Saudi Arabia (0.5 per cent) and even Iraq (0.1 per cent) had a net positive flow, showing that they attracted more higher education students than they sent abroad. However, the rate was very low in comparison with that of the developed countries, as shown by the figures in parentheses (see Statistical Appendix Table 6).

CENTRAL ASIA
Central Asia had 1.88 million enrolments in 2004. It experienced the slowest growth during the study period, with only a 1.1 per cent annual average growth rate. The gross enrolment ratio was 25 per cent in 2004. It is striking to note that in a world of ever-growing higher education, enrolment in three countries dropped during this period. These countries were Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan. The increase in enrolment in other countries was also very low compared with countries in other regions. Enrolment in this region’s countries suffered most after the breakdown of the former Soviet Union.

The private sector has also started to play an increasing role in this region and the state has reduced its past role. Five countries reported on the private sector’s enrolment share. This varied from 7 per cent in Kyrgyzstan to 32 per cent in Mongolia, which raises concerns about varying quality (see Statistical Appendix Tables 4 and 5).

In 2004, nine countries sent more than 1,000 students abroad for higher education. Six countries reported receiving incoming students from abroad. Of these, two countries, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia, had a positive flow rate of 6.7 per cent and 0.7 per cent respectively. Four countries had a negative flow rate which varied from –1.8 per cent in Azerbaijan to –3.8 per cent in Mongolia. The Russian Federation was the most popular destination for students from Armenia (1,239), Kazakhstan (20,098), Tajikistan (708) and Turkmenistan (1,385). Germany received the highest number of students from Georgia (3,000) and Mongolia (1,400). Turkey was at the top of the list for Azerbaijan (1,395) and Kyrgyzstan (784). Kyrgyzstan was the top destination for Uzbekistan. It received 9,856 students from that country (see Statistical Appendix Table 6).

EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
In 2004, there were 38.9 million students in this region. Of these, 19.4 million were students in only one country, China. China now has the biggest higher education sector in the world. Twenty-four out of the 34 countries in the region reported (important non-reporting countries were the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Papua New Guinea and Singapore; other countries had only a few or no higher education students). The region had an average GER of 23 per cent and a strong potential for further expansion in the near future. The average annual growth rate for the region was approximately 9 per cent. It varied widely from a minimum of 0.49 per cent in Japan with a GER of 54 per cent, to 18.33 per cent in Vietnam with a GER of 10 per cent. Five countries/territories out of the 24 that reported had achieved mass higher education (as defined by Trow, 2000) with over 50 per cent enrolment ratio in 2004. These countries are Australia (72 per cent), Japan (54 per cent), Macao, China (69 per cent), New Zealand (72 per cent) and the Republic of Korea (89 per cent). Cambodia, which had the lowest participation rate, had a GER of 3 per cent.

Twelve countries reported on their private sector’s share in enrolment. This varied from 1 per cent in Australia to 81 per cent in the Republic of Korea. In addition to the Republic of Korea, the following countries reported that over half of their total enrolment was in the private sector: Japan (77 per cent), Macao in China (67 per cent), the Philippines (66 per cent) and Indonesia (61 per cent). An upward trend in the private sector has been observed in this region (see Statistical Appendix Tables 4 and 5).

With respect to cross-border higher education, 33 countries sent students abroad and 18 reported inbound students. Thirteen out of 18 countries had a negative inflow rate, varying from –0.1 per cent in the Philippines to –34.3 per cent in Brunei Darussalam. This region also had some countries with a very high positive inflow rate.
These included: Macao in China (55.5 per cent), Fiji (21.6 per cent), Australia (16.0 per cent) and New Zealand (10.2 per cent). In addition, Japan had a positive flow rate of 1.2 per cent. Fiji's high positive rate is due to the presence of the University of the South Pacific; Macao receives a large number of students from the mainland; and Australia has an aggressive policy on exporting higher education.

Among the receiving countries, the USA stands at the top of the list for 13 countries of the region, followed by Australia for eight countries, New Zealand for four and Papua New Guinea for three. The United Kingdom, France, Italy, Portugal and Vietnam are the most popular destinations for students from one country each.

China sent the highest number of students abroad: 343,126 students. This was followed by the Republic of Korea which sent 95,885 students abroad. Japan sent 60,424 students abroad and Malaysia sent 40,884 students (see Statistical Appendix Table 6).

In our view, the size and variety of cross-border higher education in the region raises concerns about quality.

SOUTH AND WEST ASIA
Enrolment in higher education in this region was 15.5 million. Seven countries reported. These included India, which has the third largest higher education sector in the world, with an enrolment of 11.3 million. The regional average GER was only 11 per cent. The minimum was close to zero in the Maldives, which can be explained by its small size and relatively low income. There was also a low 1 per cent GER in Afghanistan. The highest GER was 22 per cent in Iran. This region has the largest potential for growth.

The regional average annual growth rate during the past decade was 9 per cent. This varied from a low of 0.92 per cent in Afghanistan, which was going through socio-political turmoil and an armed conflict, to 16.17 per cent in Iran.

Only three countries reported on the private sector’s share in enrolment: Bangladesh with 58 per cent, Iran with 54 per cent and Pakistan with 12 per cent. Although India has the largest enrolment in the region, it did not report on its share in the private sector, which has an ambiguous status. However, the role of the private sector is fast increasing in the region (see Statistical Appendix Tables 4 and 5).

Although nine countries in this region reported outbound students, flow rates were only available for four countries. All of them are negative. They varied from –0.8 per cent in Iran to –3.5 per cent in Pakistan. The rate in Bangladesh was –1.5 per cent and the rate in India was –1.0 per cent. Although 124,000 students from India were studying abroad, India only received 7,738 students from abroad (see Statistical Appendix Table 6).

The private sector is expanding fast and has an increasing role. Therefore, quality assurance is required for in-country programmes. In addition, the phenomenon of dependency creates the rationale for an accreditation system for imported programmes and for strong state policy on the role of the state – rather than the public sector and the foreign providers – in terms of onsite and online arrangements.

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE
This region had a total enrolment of 18.5 million in 2004 and an average GER of 54 per cent demonstrating the achievement of mass higher education on the whole in the region as defined above. The average annual growth rate of enrolment in the region in the recent past had been 6.6 per cent approximately. The rate varied from 1.2 per cent in Bulgaria with a GER of 41 per cent to 11.7 per cent in Hungary with a GER of 52 per cent. This region enjoys quite a high participation rate. Nine out of 20 countries had attained mass higher education in 2004. Latvia had the highest GER at 71 per cent and Albania had the lowest at 16 per cent in 2004. Socioeconomic transition, political turmoil, and to a certain extent, cultural factors prevented some countries from achieving mass higher education.

The role of the private sector in the region is a new phenomenon. In most countries, it only began to operate after the breakdown of the former Soviet Union. Private sector enrolment in 12 reporting countries out of 20 varied from 1 per cent in Slovakia to 83 per cent in Estonia. The average value was 15 per cent. The trend is definitely upward, which raises concerns about quality (see Statistical Appendix Tables 4 and 5).

With respect to cross-border higher education, 20 countries sent over 1,000 students abroad and 19 countries reported incoming students. Seventeen countries had a negative flow rate, varying from –0.4 per cent in the Ukraine to –29.3 per cent in Albania, with an average value of –7.2 per cent for Bulgaria. Two countries had a positive net flow. These were the Russian Federation (0.5 per cent) and the Czech Republic (1.3 per cent). The biggest exporting country for this region is Germany. It is at the top of the list for Bosnia and Herzegovina (2,801), Bulgaria (12,116), Croatia (5,437), the Czech Republic (2,483), Hungary (3,097), Lithuania (1,701), Poland (15,417), the Russian Federation (11,462), Serbia and Montenegro (3,747), Slovenia (628), Turkey (27,582) and the Ukraine (7,618). Russia is the most popular destina-

...
tion for students from the following countries: Belarus (6,010), Estonia (1,217) and Latvia (1,022). Italy is the top destination for students from Albania (8,494); Romania for Moldova (4,111); France for Romania (4,474), the Czech Republic for Slovakia (6,938) and Bulgaria for Macedonia (2,690) (see Statistical Appendix Table 6). The influence of geographical affinity and similarity of educational systems can be observed in cross-border higher education in the region. However, quality does remain a concern because of the rapid changes occurring in the structure, content and methods of higher education in order to make them relevant.

NORTH AMERICA AND WESTERN EUROPE
 Twenty-four countries in the region reported on higher education enrolment in 2004. The richest region of the world had a total enrolment of 32.9 million and an average GER of 70 per cent, which was the highest among all the regions. Perhaps as a consequence, this region had the lowest regional average growth rate during the period at only 1.6 per cent. The growth rate varied from 0.11 per cent in the Netherlands with a GER of 58 per cent, to 14.2 per cent in Israel with a GER of 57 per cent. Seventeen out of the 24 countries had achieved mass higher education in 2004. Two countries were only slightly behind, at 49 per cent (Austria) and 47 per cent (Switzerland). However, some small countries/territories had a very low GER. For example, Liechtenstein had only 440 students with no reported GER value, Andorra had a GER of 9 per cent and Luxemburg 12 per cent. Cyprus had a GER of 32 per cent and Malta had a GER of 30 per cent. The potential for further growth of enrolment in this region is low.

Sixteen countries reported on the private sector’s share in enrolment. This varied from 1 per cent in Cyprus to 100 per cent in the United Kingdom, Netherlands and Liechtenstein, followed by Israel at 84 per cent (see Statistical Appendix Tables 4 and 5).

The cross-border higher education flow rate was available for 22 countries. This is the only region where the majority of countries (12) had a positive net flow rate. The rate varied from 0.1 per cent in Italy and Canada to 29.3 per cent in Switzerland. The negative flow rates that prevailed in 10 countries varied from –365 per cent in Andorra to –3.6 per cent in Malta. Small countries/territories like Andorra, Luxemburg and Cyprus had highly negative flow rates, which stood at –365 per cent, –198 per cent, and –66 per cent respectively. This is mainly due to their size and their relatively high income, which enables students to study abroad.

The most popular receiving countries were Spain (for three countries), Germany (for four countries), France (for three countries), the USA (for three countries), Greece (for one country), the United Kingdom (for nine countries), Sweden (for one country), Belgium (for one country), Denmark (for one country), Switzerland (for one country) and Italy (for one country). This shows that the UK attracts the highest number of students from the largest number of countries. Although the USA attracts the highest total number of foreign students, these students come from fewer countries (see Statistical Appendix Table 6).

The region is already involved in accreditation for quality assurance, as we have noted before, and we will look at this in more detail later.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
 Twenty-eight countries reported in this region. Total enrolment was 14.6 million in 2004. The average GER was 28 per cent and varied from a minimum of 3 per cent in Belize to 62 per cent in Bermuda and 61 per cent in Argentina. The average growth rate of enrolment for the region was 6.17 per cent. The lowest average growth rate was 0.10 per cent (almost stagnant during the decade) in Costa Rica. Costa Rica had a GER of 19 per cent. The statistics show a large potential for enrolment growth in the region.

Fourteen countries reported on the private sector’s share in enrolment. This varied from a minimum of 3 per cent in Belize and 4 per cent in Saint Lucia to a maximum of 74 per cent in Chile. Brazil followed with a 68 per cent private sector share. Paraguay had 58 per cent and Colombia 55 per cent. The proportion of private sector enrolment in the region is quite significant and appears to be rising. Therefore, attention should be focused on quality assurance and on the role of the state and public higher education institutions in terms of finance and increased absorptive capacity (see Statistical Appendix Tables 4 and 5).

With respect to cross-border higher education, 41 countries reported outbound enrolment. However, only 17 reported inbound enrolment. The net flow rate was negative for 14 countries. It varied from extremely low values of –0.1 per cent in Chile, –0.7 per cent in Venezuela, –0.9 per cent in Mexico and –1.0 per cent in Honduras, to higher values of –44.9 per cent in Saint Lucia, –39.7 per cent in the Cayman Islands and –23.5 per cent in Trinidad and Tobago. These are small islands that need a lot of cross-border higher education because of their size and the fixed costs they would have if they ran their higher education systems independently. The two countries that had a positive flow rate are Cuba at 5.3 per cent and Uruguay at 0.2 per cent.

AN OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON ACCREDITATION IN TODAY’S WORLD
The USA is the main receiver of students from 35 countries. Cuba is the most popular destination for three countries. Spain, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom each receive the most students from one country (see Statistical Appendix Table 6).

The increasing role of the private sector and the role of foreign countries in the region’s higher education system are raising interest in establishing quality assurance mechanisms at both national and regional level.

THE EXISTING STATE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS IN THE REGIONS

We discussed the different types of quality assurance mechanisms and accreditations in Part I. The GUNI secretariat conducted a census of the prevailing mechanisms in all the countries of the world. Information was available on 177 countries. These were classified into the following categories:

1. countries practising institutional accreditation
2. countries practising programmatic accreditation
3. countries practising both
4. countries in the process of introducing accreditation systems
5. countries that have a system of quality assessment
6. countries that have unofficial and irregular evaluation mechanisms and
7. countries in which no information was available to the GUNI Secretariat at the time the census was conducted, implying that they did not have any accreditation mechanisms.

The results for each region are given below. See Table II.1.1 and Map 3.

Out of the 19 countries that reported from the Arab States region, four practised both an institutional and programmatic accreditation mechanism. One practised only an institutional mechanism, ten were in the process of introducing an accreditation system and the rest did not provide any information.

In Central and Eastern Europe, out of 21 countries reporting, six had an institutional accreditation mechanism, one used programmatic accreditation and 11 had both an institutional and a programmatic accreditation mechanism. In addition, three countries practised a procedure of quality assessment without accreditation.

In Central Asia, out of seven countries reporting, four practised both institutional and programmatic accreditation procedures, one had an institutional accreditation mechanism, one was in the process of introducing an accreditation mechanism and one used an unofficial mechanism of quality assurance.

Twenty-two countries reported from the East Asia and the Pacific region. Nine of them were in the process of introducing accreditation mechanisms. Six of them practised both institutional and programmatic procedures and one practised programmatic procedures alone. None had institutional accreditation mechanisms. Six did not provide any information.

Thirty-four countries reported from the Latin American and Caribbean region. Fourteen of them practised both institutional and programmatic accreditation procedures, four conducted only institutional accreditation and only one carried out programmatic accreditation alone. Eight countries were in the process of introducing accreditation mechanisms and two had quality assessment mechanisms without proper accreditation. Five countries did not provide any information.

In North America and Western Europe, out of 25 countries reporting 11 practised both procedures, two practised institutional accreditation and three practised programmatic accreditation alone. Four were in the process of introducing accreditation mechanisms. An additional four had some sort of quality assessment mechanisms and one practised unofficial evaluation procedures.

Six countries from South and South West Asia reported on quality assurance. Two practised both institutional and programmatic accreditation mechanisms and two were in the process of introducing accreditation mechanisms. The remaining two had some sort of assessment mechanisms.

Out of the 43 countries that reported from Sub-Saharan Africa, only four had already introduced accreditation at both institutional and programmatic levels. Seven had accreditation mechanisms at institutional level and only one at programme level alone. Six countries were in the process of adopting accreditation procedures. One country practised some sort of assessment mechanism and four followed unofficial evaluation procedures. Twenty did not provide any information on quality assurance. This is consistent with the average GER in the region. However, the introduction of quality assessment mechanisms of one sort or another is gathering momentum as shown in the Nairobi Declaration of February 2006.

To sum up, 84 out of 177 countries had formal accreditation systems and 40 more were in the process of introducing them. In relative terms, Central and Eastern Europe had the largest proportion of countries with accreditation mechanisms. This region was followed, interestingly, by Central Asia, then North America and...
Western Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The Arab States and Sub-Saharan Africa were at the bottom of the list, with close to a quarter of reporting countries having formal accreditation procedures. This is consistent with the current GER. Such countries have relatively new higher education systems that were only established after independence. More than half of the countries reporting from the Arab States were in the process of introducing mechanisms. Sub-Saharan Africa had the largest number of countries with no information available on accreditation. As indicated above, this may imply that the region has the largest number of countries that are not covered by accreditation.

Having an accreditation system in place does not necessarily mean that all the institutions in that country are covered. For example, India has adopted both institutional and programmatic accreditation. However, only a small number of institutions are covered. China has the largest higher education system in the world and is now in the process of introducing accreditation. When completed, this system should be able to cover the largest number of institutions in the world, at a similar level to the United States.

Table II.1.1 shows a global picture of the different forms of accreditation in different countries. These include: institutional, programmatic, both (institutional and programmatic), accreditation in process, quality assessment, non-formal systems (unofficial evaluation mechanisms) and the last category, which is countries with no available information on accreditation, implying that they do not have an accreditation system. Map 3 of this volume presents a graphic view of the above classifications.

The Table II.1.1 and Map 3 show that both institutional and programmatic accreditation prevail in the USA, almost all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, Australia and India. Both types of accreditation also predominate in North (Norway, Sweden and Finland) and East European Countries (Bulgaria, Romania and Poland); in some African countries like Nigeria and South Africa; and in the Sudan in the Arab States region. In Russia and some African Countries, for example Ethiopia and Tanzania, institutional accreditation predominates. In Canada the main type of accreditation is programmatic accreditation.

Accreditation procedures are in the process of being introduced in China; in some Arab countries, for example Saudi Arabia and Algeria; some Sub-Saharan African countries like Mozambique and Zimbabwe; some European countries such as Spain and Italy; and Latin American countries like Uruguay and Honduras.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>Institutional</th>
<th>Programmatic</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>In process</th>
<th>Quality assessment</th>
<th>Non-formal</th>
<th>No available information</th>
<th>Total reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab States</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Asia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia and Pacific</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South and South West Asia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and Eastern Europe</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America and Western Europe</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: See Statistical Appendix Table 9. Accreditation in the world: countries and types. GUNI Secretariat.
expansion are given in the individual papers in this volume and in special contributions and boxes. A brief overview highlighting some significant aspects of these papers is provided below.

Sub-Saharan Africa has low rates of enrolment in higher education, as previously mentioned. One of the main conclusions of two recent regional meetings on the quality of higher education in Africa is that, even in the absence of national systems of quality assurance, a significant number of higher education institutions in the region have adopted, or are in the process of adopting some kind of quality assurance.

In the Arab States the debate evolved from an initial questioning of whether new forms of quality assurance were needed, towards research on the most effective approaches to quality assurance. Since 1990, the main steps in this direction have been taken through a Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees (1990). Two recent efforts to establish regional organizations, The Arab States Quality Assurance Network, and a non-governmental society, The Arab Society for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Education (ASQUAE) followed this direction. Nevertheless, most of the existing national frameworks lack the basic conditions of a proper external quality assurance or accreditation agency. Although they have a written statement and a set of objectives, there is still no systematic approach to achieving the objectives, or a clear policy to translate the mission statement of the aforementioned organizations of quality assurance into systematic actions.

Asia-Pacific is a vast and diversified region with 65 developed and developing countries with similarities and differences in the process of accreditation. The growing concern for quality in this region includes the following main points: keeping the objective of self-improvement of HEIs in a central place; indirect funding links with incentives should not affect basic funding; the unit of assessment does not undermine the importance of considering the institution as a whole; the inclusive nature of the clientele; having a reporting strategy that provides more public information; and making the quality assurance process an exercise in partnership that takes the participatory role of the HEIs beyond the preparation of the self-study report.

The countries of Europe and North America have fairly similar high rates of enrolment and standards that are of a certain minimum quality in both institutions and programmes. However, there are both similarities and differences in accreditation procedures in these countries. Table II.1.1 and Map 3 provide us with more detail on these issues.

The main feature of the accreditation systems of Europe and North America is a long tradition of quality assurance and accreditation. In Europe, key steps have been taken to attain a certain harmony in accreditation procedures. The creation of the European Higher Education Area, by means of the Bologna Process, requires a degree of coordination on these issues among the national higher education systems. Accreditation agencies, such as ENQA, ECA and others, are playing an important role in achieving these goals.

In North America, the United States and Canada have different systems of tertiary education and wide experience in the issues of accreditation and quality assurance. Despite differences in their approaches, both countries have developed quality assurance models based on multiple, overlapping mechanisms with no central direction. However, there are significant differences between the systems. In Canada, the government, primarily at the provincial or territorial level, has a strong role in quality assurance. In the USA, many states have a narrow role in quality assurance. Institutional accreditation is a strong focus in the USA while the focus in Canada is on programmes, both in terms of accreditation and programme review. Recently, the US and Canadian governments have made parallel efforts to increase university efficiency and accountability by developing performance indicators.

In Latin America and the Caribbean several factors have created serious challenges for quality maintenance. These include: a huge expansion of enrolment in a period of financial crisis; reduced state budgets for higher education; the emergence of the private sector and different models of higher education. Therefore, quality assurance and accreditation are needed. National agencies of accreditation have been established to achieve this objective in Argentina, Central American countries, Colombia, Mexico, Chile and many other countries of the region. Both institutional and programmatic accreditation prevail. One of the main objectives of creating these agencies was to assure quality despite the enormous growth of both public and private higher education and to control the explosion of private higher education. Private institutions and programmes are of very low quality in many cases.

We conclude this overview of regional perceptions with the results of one particular aspect of the GUNI Secretariat’s Delphi poll. Higher education institutions in a period of globalization look for international credibility. Therefore, it would appear that international accreditation will be more attractive in the future, even though few institutions have adopted it today. The GUNI Delphi poll demonstrates that opinion on this issue is divided. Forty-two per cent of the experts polled around the world con-
sider accreditation necessary; 46.4 per cent find it necessary depending upon the process of international accreditation used; and 11.6 per cent find it unnecessary. The regional breakdown of the results is quite interesting. In Africa, 58.3 per cent of the experts favoured international accreditation; 45.5 per cent of experts from Latin America favoured it, 44.8 per cent from Europe; and 42.9 per cent from Asia-Pacific. Experts from the Arab States were most suspicious about such procedures. Only 21.4 per cent from this region were in favour of international accreditation. This was followed by the USA and Canada with 33.3 per cent. The percentage of those rejecting international accreditation varies from 18.2 per cent of respondents from Latin America and the Caribbean to 6.9 per cent of those from Europe. It is striking that respondents who accept international accreditation, depending upon the procedure, come from Europe, where models of higher education are quite varied. Even most experts from the Arab States (71.4 per cent) would like to have international accreditation if the procedure is suitable. This leads us to conclude that, as in many other areas of higher education, in accreditation we have to think globally but act locally. Institutional, national and regional characteristics should be given due consideration in designing the type of accreditation and the criteria.

We shall follow this principle in our report. An analysis of regional perceptions follows.

NOTE

1 The authors wish to thank Yazmín Cruz López from the GUNI Secretariat for her assistance.

REFERENCE