



CHARACTERIZATION OF GDN ANNUAL MEETING

[The Groningen Declaration Network](#) reaches some 2500 stakeholders in the GDN “Digital Learner (including students and skilled workers) Data Ecosystem”. Dubbed in a [2018 UNESCO report](#) as one of the 6 most relevant convenors dealing with digital credentialing and life-long learning (next to the African Development Bank, the European Commission, the OECD, UNESCO and the World Bank), the GDN ecosystem aims at bringing together organizations and individuals that have an interest in digital learner data, and at furthering the dialogue how to best serve learners and third parties.

GDN Ecosystem stakeholder organizations and individuals

the direct beneficiaries: Learners, which includes both students and skilled workers and third parties such as

- education providers at secondary, post-secondary and tertiary education level
- student unions
- quality assurance agencies
- funding agencies (in the Indian context: UGC)
- authorities at international/national/regional/provincial level, including relevant educational and employment/labor market authorities
- international associations dealing with international education and global employment
- organizations dealing with credential evaluation and recognition
- authorities dealing with immigration issues, particularly with work and study permits
- bodies dealing with professional licensing
- software and systems developers
- press and media



Size and composition of attendee group

Starting with its inaugural meeting in 2012, in Groningen, The Netherlands, GDN annual meeting venues rotate around the globe, touching base in all continents. From 55 attendees at the start, the number of attendees has risen to 160 in 2018, at the Paris meeting, and to 145 in 2019, at the Puebla meeting.

Expected attendance at 2021 Annual Meeting

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 annual meeting, scheduled to take place in April 2020 in New Delhi had to be cancelled. For 2021, the GDN annual meeting will be hosted in Ottawa, Canada from 10 to 12 November. Given uncertainties around vaccination practice and the accompanying uncertainties about health and travel regulations, the 2021 annual meeting will be a hybrid one, catering for both in person meetings and presentations and virtual presentations and attendance.

At the time of writing, the expectation is that some 100 delegates might have the possibility to travel to Canada, with other delegates attending the proceedings virtually. Actual attendance rates may well differ at the time of the meeting, depending on variables that the organization committee monitors on a regular basis and which might give rise to (hopefully) scaling up or scaling down venue capacity. For information – for the 2022 Annual Meeting, attendance figures are tentatively projected at 250.

Composition of attendee group

From its outset, the GDN annual meetings brings together professionals in very diverse functions and organizational levels, ensuring much needed networking and cross-fertilization between practitioners, service providers, policy officers and decision takers from international organizations (European Commission, OECD, UNESCO, World Bank, more), international associations, national government bodies, HEIs, service providers and so forth.

At any GDN annual meeting, one may thus find a mix of Presidents, CEOs, Directors-General, Senior Government Officials, Mid-Level Senior Practitioners and Students, with the average age of the attendee group varying from 30 to 60.