

Holly Kletke, President
Travel Report
Groningen Declaration Network General Meeting
November 10 - 12 2021

Conference Day 1

The first day of the conference began with a welcome breakfast to newcomers, including an address by the Groningen Declaration Network President, Kathleen Massey, and introductions to Board members. Then we moved to the main conference room for the first plenary session, including a keynote speech by Denise Amyot, President and CEO of Colleges and Institutes Canada. This was a very informative, and an inspiring start to the conference.

We then had panel sessions on a number of topics, including digital credentials in small states, digitisation in India, and cultural diplomacy in a digital world. After lunch there were a number of breakout sessions scheduled, and I attended sessions on interoperable data, digital credentials and educational achievements, and digitizing recognition networks. Following that was a very educational and charismatic panel session on building a global learning data ecosystem. We then had a welcome reception, where I got to meet and speak with a number of industry professionals.

Conference Day 2

I began the second day of the conference by attending a panel on microcredentials and learner mobility, followed by a panel on USA's learning and employment record. After lunch there were more breakout sessions, and I attended ones on digital credential infrastructure, and implementing digital comprehensive learner records. Following that, I attended a panel on the secret to connecting education and industry. We then had a ceremony for new signatories to the declaration, and Kathleen Massey signed on behalf of the UofL, which is incredibly exciting.

Following that, there was an annual dinner hosted on the top floor of the hotel. During the dinner I spoke with a number of GDN board members, and with my fellow student panelists. It was a very enjoyable evening.

Conference Day 3

This was the last day of the conference and also the day of the student panel. We started the morning with a brief business meeting to introduce the incoming board members. Then we had an update from the South African Qualifications Authority, talking about their priorities for the upcoming year. There was a keynote speech following that from the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer Executive Director, Yvette Munro, which was a very enlightening on bettering transferability in Ontario. Then it was time for the panel on the student voice. I was joined by the Secretary General of the All African Students' Union, Peter Kwasi Kodjie, the Vice President of the European Students' Union, Jakub Grodecki, and the steering committee member of the Global Student Forum, Ankit Tripathi. We spoke about the

Office of the Students' Union

challenges and opportunities that students are currently facing, equitability in digital mobility, and the UNESCO global convention on recognition. I was very humbled to be part of such a wonderful panel of inspiring students. After that, we had breakout sessions, and I attended one on credential evaluation and what it means for students, and digital credentials and their impact on student mobility. Then we had lunch, and after that we heard country updates from Germany, Italy and Europe. Before we wrapped up the conference, we had a closing session called "Bridging Yesterday to Tomorrow: a Knowledge Resource to Inform Policy around Access and Mobility". It was an excellent summation of the conference, and provided great launching points for future work. We finished the conference with closing remarks from the outgoing President Kathleen Massey, and incoming President Francisco Maldonado Altieri.

Overall, I learned a lot at this conference, and am uplifted by the work that this group of individuals will continue to do to work towards an equitable and holistic recognition of higher learning. I look forward to maintaining the relationships I made at the conference and to continue to watch what the Groningen Declaration Network achieves.