The Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education were developed and adopted to support and encourage international cooperation and enhance the understanding of the importance of quality provision in cross-border higher education. The purposes of the Guidelines are to protect students and other stakeholders from low-quality provision and disreputable providers (that is, degree and accreditation mills) as well as to encourage the development of quality cross-border higher education that meets human, social, economic and cultural needs. The Guidelines are not legally binding and member countries are expected to implement them as appropriate in their national context. Based on a survey of the main recommendations of the Guidelines, this report monitors the extent to which the OECD countries and a few non-member countries comply with its recommendations. The Survey was sent out in June 2010 to all OECD countries. The Secretariat has also collaborated with the UNESCO Secretariat to have the questionnaire sent to all UNESCO
non-OECD country delegations. Twenty-three responses were obtained from 22 Members: Australia, Austria, Belgium (Flemish and French communities), Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Netherlands, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States; and 9 non-Members: Bulgaria, Colombia, Fiji, Indonesia, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Oman, Rwanda. Government representatives were asked to co-ordinate with the other stakeholders covered to answer the survey. The main conclusion of the survey is that (responding) countries report a high level of compliance with the Guidelines recommendations. On average, compliance performance of the responding OECD countries reaches 72%. The level of compliance decreases to 67% when recommendations to student bodies are included, but the level of missing information, and thus uncertainty about actual compliance, increases significantly. Tertiary education institutions are the group of stakeholders that follow most of the recommendations of the Guidelines, with an average compliance index of 0.80 (80%). The governments’ average compliance is 76%. Paradoxically, quality assurance and accreditation bodies’ compliance with the Guidelines is lower than governments’ and tertiary education institutions’. Student bodies only conform to 51% of the recommendations – with the caveat that information about their activities was generally scant in the survey answers. The objectives or desirable practices emphasized by the Guidelines are: 1) the inclusion of crossborder higher education in countries’ regulatory framework, 2) the comprehensive coverage of all forms of cross-border higher education, 3) student and customer protection, 4) transparency in procedures (for providers), 5) information access and dissemination (for potential international students), 6) collaboration. Four of these objectives are largely met on average: countries have regulatory frameworks or arrangements in place, cover different forms of cross-border higher education comprehensively, are transparent in their procedures, and are engaged in national and international collaboration. The current main weaknesses in compliance lie in ensuring an easy access to information and the level of student and customer protection. While there is probably no need for a revision of the Guidelines, countries should continue to disseminate and implement the recommendations. The main areas of improvement lie in measures to improve student and customer protection as well as the transparency in procedures of assessment, registration, and licensing for providers. Further progress in the ease of access of information for students would also be welcome.