



Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en
Wetenschap



Public launch of the Treaty
September 27th 2021, Brussels

Treaty on the automatic
recognition of higher
education qualifications

by the Baltic states &
Benelux member states

Berto Bosscha
Emmy Heijmans

December 1st-2nd 2021



Introducing





Importance of automatic recognition

The need for automatic recognition of qualifications has been repeatedly emphasised

Bucharest Communiqué – 2012

Yerevan Communiqué - 2015

Paris Communiqué - 2018

In higher education, recognition procedures often remain too complicated or too expensive and too many mobile students do not obtain full recognition of successfully achieved learning outcomes.

*However, **several Member States have taken the initiative to make progress towards automatic mutual recognition, including through the signature of regional agreements.** These initiatives could serve as models for the creation of a Union-wide system. – 2018 Council Recommendation*



Start of the multilateral treaty

- The Decision of the **Benelux Committee of Ministers** concerning the automatic mutual generic level recognition of higher education degrees in **2015** (bachelor's degrees and master's degrees).
 - supplemented by the decision in **2018** (associate degrees and doctoral degrees).
- The Agreement among the **Government of the Republic of Estonia, the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania** on the automatic academic recognition of qualifications concerning higher education in **2018**.
- Declaration of Intent by the Baltic States and Benelux Member States to explore the possibilities for drafting a multilateral treaty in **2019**.



Aims of the treaty



Mutual **trust** in the education systems

More **transparent** recognition

Contribution to the **EHEA**



Automatic recognition in practice

→ A HE qualification is automatically recognised **at the same level** of the corresponding HE qualification (AD, BA, MA, doctoral) issued by another country.

The basis for mutual trust lies in the ratification of the LRC and active membership of the EHEA.

- The treaty/AR does *not* apply to:
 - a) recognition of the specific programmes
 - b) recognition of periods of study
 - c) recognition of qualifications that do not belong to the HE system
 - d) recognition of professional qualifications



Accession to the treaty by other countries

Countries may apply to accede to the treaty by handing in an application to the depositary (the Secretariat-General of the Benelux Union)

... if the following conditions are met (article 13)

1. Ratification of Lisbon Recognition Convention
2. Member of the European Higher Education Area
3. Application of trustworthy quality assurance systems for HE programmes, demonstrated by proven compliance with the ESG
4. A three-cycle system, in compliance with the QF-EHEA
5. Referencing of the national HE QF to the EQF



More information

- [Link to the Treaty](#)
- [Link to the Declaration of intent](#)
- [Link to the Council Recommendation](#)

For more factual information on the relevant provisions of the Treaty, please contact Mr. Stephane Verwilghen (s.verwilghen@benelux.int) of the Benelux Secretariat.