

**HUMAN RIGHTS,
DEMOCRACY
AND THE RULE OF LAW**

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

**DROITS DE L'HOMME,
DÉMOCRATIE
ET ÉTAT DE DROIT**

3rd TPG B on LRC Meeting 29th of January 2026



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Ad hoc Working Group on Automatic Recognition and the development of a new legal instrument

▶ **Ad Hoc Working Group on Automatic Recognition:**

- **Set up in 2022 - for the period from 2 February 2023 through 31 December 2024**
- **Renewed and enlarged until 31 December 2026**

Purpose:

to advise the Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU) on the development of a common framework for automatic recognition of higher education qualifications

Composition of the present Working Group:

- **Lisbon Recognition Convention Bureau**
- **ENIC Bureau/NARIC Advisory Board**
- **Public authorities' representatives**
- **Stakeholder organisations in higher education (ESU, EUA, EURASHE, EQAR, EHEA, EURODOC)**
- **Experts in the recognition field**
- **European Commission**
- **UNESCO**

Between 2023 and 2025, WG on Automatic Recognition carried out the following activities:

- **conducted a feasibility study for a legally binding instrument on automatic recognition of qualifications;**
- **held consultations with students;**
- **held online consultations with Higher Education Institutions;**
- **held consultations with Public Authorities;**
- **held consultations with the Benelux Secretariat of the Multilateral Treaty of on Automatic Recognition of qualifications and the Treaty Office of the Council of Europe**

- The enlarged WG concluded that there is a need for a new legal binding instrument
- Whose purpose is to define the principles and conditions conducive to the AR of Qualifications
- It will define automatic recognition of qualifications
- It will apply to qualifications within higher education systems at degree level
- It will build on the Lisbon Recognition Convention and on the Treaty on the automatic recognition of higher education qualifications
- It identifies the systems and instruments (building blocks) that are the conditions for AR

- **The Steering Committee on Education of the CoE adopted the proposal of a Convention**
- **The Committee of Ministers adopted the proposal**
- **An intergovernmental drafting group will draft the new Convention**
- **The new text should be finalised by the end of the year and adopted by the Committee of Ministers**

Proposed scope

Automatic recognition will refer to the right of a qualification holder to have their degree recognised at the corresponding level without the need for a separate recognition procedure. Automatic recognition thus means there is no formal assessment procedure for the purpose of (generic) recognition. It promotes and facilitates student mobility and international cooperation and reduces administrative barriers for qualification holders.

Draft Title

Convention on the conditions of transparency and quality assurance for automatic recognition of higher education qualifications in Europe

The Convention

- The proposed Convention is not intended to establish automatic recognition between its Parties directly. Rather, its purpose is to lay the foundations for such recognition by ensuring that all Parties meet the essential standards of transparency, quality assurance and data reliability that underpin mutual trust
- Will apply to qualifications belonging to the **three higher education cycles** as defined within the European Higher Education Area, while **leaving admission decisions fully within the autonomy of higher education institutions.**
- To ensure trust and transparency, Parties will be required to **verify that each qualification has been issued by a recognised higher education institution operating within an accredited national system**, and to **ensure that all qualifications covered by the Convention are placed within a National Qualifications Framework referenced to the QF-EHEA**
- The Convention will apply **solely to academic recognition** and will **not extend to professional recognition or regulated professions**, which remain governed by separate legal frameworks.

Building blocks:

Ratification and full implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, compliance with Bologna structural reforms, and full transparency of higher education systems

Quality assurance: full alignment with European Standards and Guidelines, recognising that trust in quality assurance is inseparable from trust in qualifications

Qualifications frameworks: States Parties must operate national qualifications frameworks referenced to the QF-EHEA and EQF, ensuring the comparability of levels and learning outcomes

Transparency, participation, and integrity. This includes the Diploma Supplement, effective credit transfer systems, measures against academic fraud, active inclusion of students in governance, and ethical standards in higher education management.

To be continued...

Thank you for your attention!