

# Roadmap Secondary School Teacher NL-BE-DE



Version: Fall 2019

## General information

The profession of secondary school teacher is a regulated profession in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany. This means that it is not possible to work across the border without recognition.

In order to work across the border, two conditions must be met:

1. The diplomas and work experience must be recognised
2. Access to the labour market should be granted

Recognition of professional qualifications and access to the labour market are two separate steps which may also be granted by two separate authorities. Recognition is based purely on diplomas, certificates and work experience. Access to the labour market can only be granted once the qualifications have been approved. This may require additional documentation such as proof of language skills or good professional behaviour.

For the profession of secondary school teacher, a recognition decision in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany is directly a teaching qualification with which a person can work in the Member State concerned.

Procedures for the recognition of qualifications have been harmonised in the EU by means of the Professional Qualifications Directive (Directive 2005/36/EC amended by Directive 2013/55/EU).

## Purpose of the roadmap

The aim of this roadmap is to provide first-line support service providers with a step-by-step plan by means of which they can better inform prospective applicants about the procedures required to be able to work across the border. The roadmap is informative in nature, no rights can be derived from it.

This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the Province of Limburg and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union. This study was carried out by the Institute for Transnational and Euregional cross border cooperation and Mobility / ITEM on behalf of the Province of Limburg (NL), lead applicant of the project. This roadmap was published by the Institute for Transnational and Euregional cross border Cooperation and Mobility / ITEM – <https://itemcrossborderportal.maastrichtuniversity.nl/>.

## Guiding Questions

1. Does the person concerned have a teaching qualification, a diploma as secondary school teacher or any other teaching diploma?

Recognition is based on the combination of diploma and work experience. If a person has neither training as a secondary school teacher nor professional experience in that field, recognition is unlikely. It is advisable to contact the relevant authority before submitting an application. Please note that additional training may be required.

2. Where does the person concerned want to work?



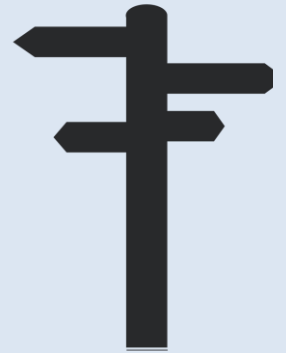
# 1. Mobility to the Netherlands

## Preliminary remark

The person concerned must indicate which subjects he or she wishes to teach in the Netherlands. It is important to orientate on the subjects that exist in the Netherlands in secondary education.

## **Alternatives instead of a recognition procedure**

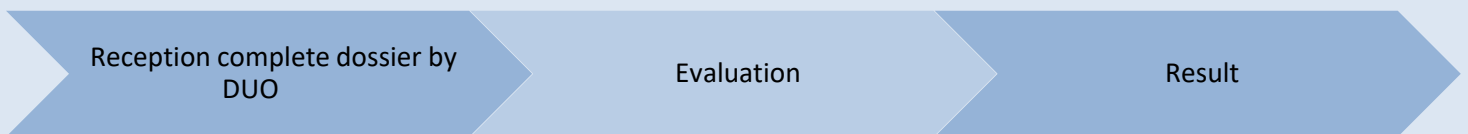
Besides recognition, there are also other [possibilities](#) to work as a teacher. In the Netherlands, for example, there are also school subjects (*schooleigen vakken*). These are determined by schools themselves (i.e. the scope and content is not determined by the State). This means that there is no need for a teaching qualification and also no need for recognition.



## Step 1 – Submission of application for recognition

The competent authority to which applications for recognition of the profession of teacher must be submitted is DUO. Submit an [online application](#) or fill in the [form](#) "*Aanvraag erkenning of tijdelijke dienstverrichting EU-beroepskwalificaties onderwijspersoneel*". Submit the application by post to DUO. The person concerned will receive a confirmation indicating whether any additional documents need to be sent.

## Step 2 – Processing of the dossier



DUO is responsible for evaluating dossiers and issuing an opinion to the Minister of Education, who ultimately takes the decision to grant recognition. DUO assesses whether there is equivalence in line with the "*Regeling erkenning EU-beroepskwalificaties onderwijspersoneel*". Professional qualifications as a teacher are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Recognition takes place on the basis of the teaching qualification, training and work experience in the home Member State. More specifically:

- The diploma must be of higher education level.
- Teacher training must have been followed in the subjects for which recognition is sought in the Netherlands.
- The teaching qualification should be comparable to the Dutch one (i.e. the age categories that can be worked with)

Did the person concerned teach abroad but not receive any teacher training? There can be no recognition. Consult the "Alternatives instead of a recognition procedure" for an overview of the possibilities to work as a teacher in the Netherlands (before Step 1).



## **Attention!**

- The recognition process is facilitated if the subjects that were taught in the home country are similar to the subjects that the person concerned wants to teach in the Netherlands.
- Completeness of documentation is essential: the processing period only starts with a complete file.

## **Costs**

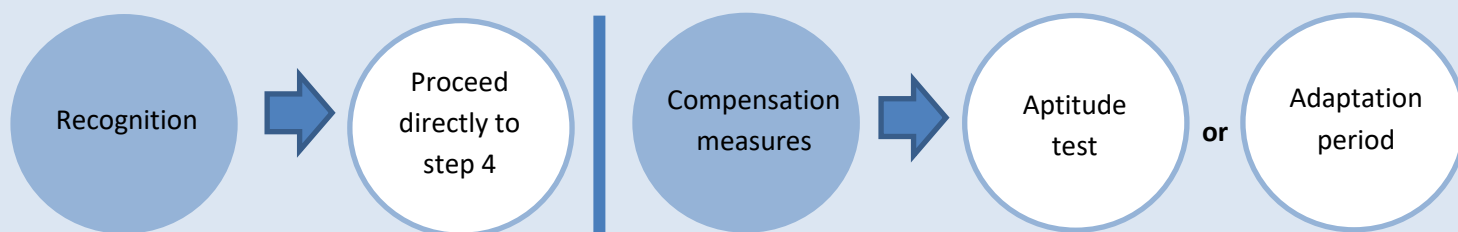
Recognition procedure      Free

### **Possible additional costs**

Certified translations (in case of documentation not in NL/EN/DE)  
Costs certificate of good conduct

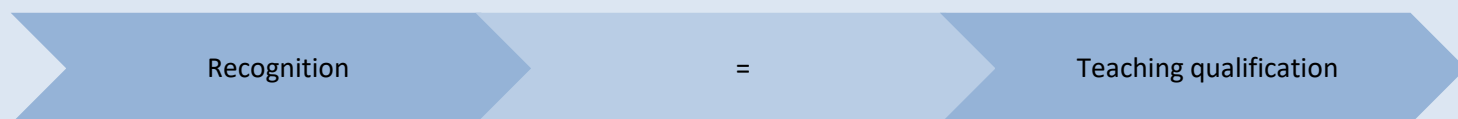
# Mobility to the Netherlands – Continued

## Step 3 – Result recognition procedure



If recognition cannot take place, compensation measures will be imposed. Compensation measures are generally imposed in case of substantial differences. In that case, the differences between Dutch and foreign education are so great that they cannot be bridged by work experience. Compensation measures are imposed to a lesser extent by DUO. This is only the case if another Member State interprets a particular subject differently from the Netherlands (e.g. in the home country the subject of physics also includes mathematics, whereas in the Netherlands these are separate subjects). However, this is not very common with EU diplomas. DUO tests whether a person has followed a course that covers the main lines of the subject he or she wishes to teach in the Netherlands. However, if recognition is requested for a subject in which the person concerned has not been demonstrably trained (e.g. an English teacher applies for recognition for the subject of mathematics), this will be regarded as another profession and a rejection will follow. Recognition can be applied for in relation to several subjects by means of a single application. Therefore, recognition may be granted for one subject and rejected for another.

## Step 4 – Labour market access



For the profession of secondary school teacher, recognition gives direct access to the labour market. This means that one is directly qualified to teach and can directly call oneself a secondary school teacher. In the recognition decision it is indicated which subjects a person can teach and age categories he/she can work with. No proof of language skills is required; it is up to the employer to test these. Before recognition is granted, a Certificate of good conduct is requested by DUO. From a cost saving point of view, it is not required to submit this document directly with the application for recognition. The declaration can be requested at a later stage and is, in many cases, also required for employment at a school.

## Further information?

Nuffic is the [Dutch Assistance Centre](#) for the Professional Qualifications Directive.

## Contact details authority

Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs  
Afdeling Diploma-erkenning en Legalisatie  
Postbus 30157  
9700 LJ Groningen

Telephone +31 (0)50 599 80 36 (daily 9-12)

E-mail [Ks.dw@duo.nl](mailto:Ks.dw@duo.nl)

Website <https://duo.nl/particulier/buitenlands-diploma-in-nederland/werken-in-het-onderwijs.jsp#>

## 2. Mobility to Belgium

### Preliminary remark

In Belgium, the competences for recognition and education are divided between the Flemish, French and German-speaking Communities. This means that an application for recognition must be submitted to the authority of the Community where a person wants to work. The procedures vary from one Community to another. Where information is provided relating to one of the three Communities, this is specifically indicated.

### Alternatives instead of a recognition procedure

In the three Communities it is possible, under certain conditions, to work in the field of education without recognition. However, this concerns temporary work when there is a shortage of qualified staff.

### Step 1 – Submission application for recognition

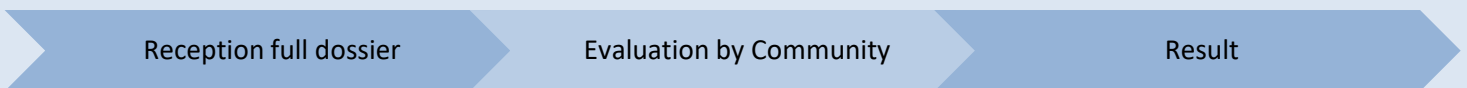
It is possible to contact the competent authorities in advance for information on the recognition process.

Submit a full application

- to the [Agentschap voor Onderwijsdiensten \(AgODi\)](#) of the Flemish Community; or
- to the [Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles](#) of the French Community (contact form); or
- to the [Ministerie](#) of the German-speaking Community.

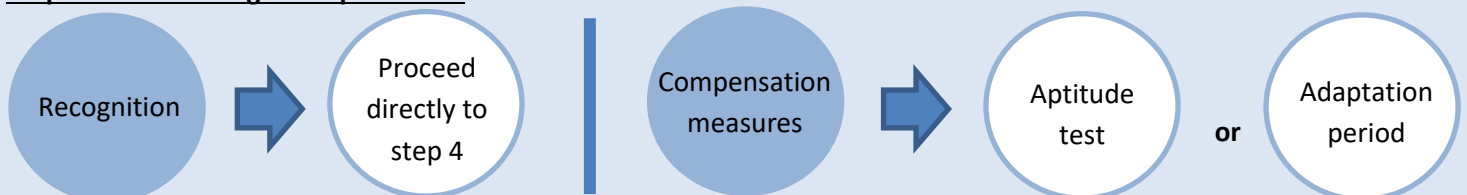
The person concerned will receive a confirmation stating whether any additional documents need to be sent.

### Step 2 – Processing of the dossier



The Community concerned is responsible for applications for recognition. Recognition is decided on a case-by-case basis and is therefore tailor-made. The emphasis is on teaching qualification in the home country (the subjects and age categories), diplomas, and work experience. In this context, the authorities ask applicants to submit a document indicating what the foreign teaching qualification looks like. Such a document can be requested from DUO in the Netherlands, and from the *Landesprüfungsämter* for education in Germany. The authorities in the Flemish and German-speaking Communities evaluate what a person can obtain in the Flemish and German-speaking Communities in terms of a teaching qualification based on their home Member state's teaching qualification. In the French Community, this is evaluated by the *Commission des titres pour l'accès aux fonctions enseignantes*.

### Step 3 – Result recognition procedure



If recognition cannot take place, compensation measures will be imposed. Compensation measures are generally imposed in case of substantial differences. In that case, the differences between training in the Belgian Communities and foreign training are so great that they cannot be bridged by work experience. In the case of the three Communities, few compensation measures are applied in relation to qualifications from the neighbouring countries (NL & DE) for the profession of secondary school teacher, the majority of cases concerns direct recognitions.

### **Attention!**

- Completeness of documentation is essential: the processing time only starts with a complete file.
- An application for recognition is submitted to the Community in which a person wants to work. It is not possible to submit an application in more than one Community.

<b>Costs</b>	Flemish Community	French Community	German-speaking Community
Recognition procedure	Free	€ 65	Free

### **Possible additional costs**

Certified translations (in case of documentation not in NL/EN/FR/DE)  
Costs proof of teaching qualification home Member State  
Costs additional documentation appointment

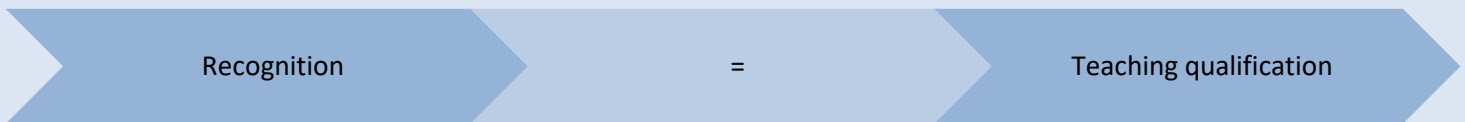
# Mobility to Belgium – Continued

**Flemish Community** – Does a certain subject not exist in the Flemish Community, but would the person concerned still like to teach it one way or another? An alternative is to apply for an [academic \(specific\) recognition](#). Through this procedure, the foreign diploma is "translated" into an equivalent Flemish diploma. In some cases, this can lead to broader competences. If it is not possible for the person concerned to obtain recognition, he or she will be referred to the department "[leraar worden](#)".

**French Community** – If a particular subject does not exist, it cannot be recognised. In that case, partial recognition may be granted for a subject for which the person concerned is qualified and which exists in the French Community. If the person concerned cannot obtain recognition under the EU Directive (e.g. because he/she does not have a valid teaching qualification or is not qualified to teach in the home country), an [equivalence à un grade académique spécifique](#) can serve as an alternative.

**German-speaking Community** – Applications from holders of German diplomas who are not yet able to work as teachers in Germany (i.e. are not fully qualified) are frequently received. In this case, a teaching qualification must first be obtained in the German-speaking Community.

## Step 4 – Labour market access



For the profession of teacher, recognition gives direct access to the labour market. This means that one is directly qualified to teach and can directly look for employment as a secondary school teacher. The recognition decision therefore also constitutes the teaching qualification and indicates, among others, the subjects and age categories to which it applies.

**Flemish Community** – in the Flemish Community there is a [language requirement](#) to work in education. Is the person concerned not yet able to speak the required level of Dutch? In that case, the school can apply for a *taalafwijking*, meaning that the necessary knowledge of the Dutch language must be acquired within three years.

**French Community** – language proficiency is checked within the first three years of employment. The [required level of language proficiency](#) depends on the function. There are various [procedures](#) in order to apply for a teaching post in the French Community.

**German-speaking Community** – a specific procedure applies in the event of appointments to the [Community education system](#). If the person concerned wants to work in education, he/she has to be proficient in the [German language](#). In order to determine the level of remuneration, the academic level of the degree is evaluated. This does not apply to Dutch diplomas because – as a result of agreements in the Benelux – there is automatic level recognition. In the case of German diplomas, however, a *niveau-Gleichstellung* must be obtained.

## Further information?

Be-assist is the [Belgian Assistance Centre](#) for the Professional Qualifications Directive.

## Contact details authority

### Flemish Community

Agentschap voor Onderwijsdiensten  
Koning Albert II-laan 15  
1210 Brussels

+32(0)2 553 65 29 (mon, tue, thur 9-12)

[Erkenning.lerarendiploma@vlaanderen.be](mailto:Erkenning.lerarendiploma@vlaanderen.be)

<https://www.vlaanderen.be/professionele-erkenning-van-een-buitenlands-lerarendiploma-in-vlaanderen>

### French Community

Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles  
Adolphe Lavalléestraat 1  
1080 Brussels

+32 (0)2 690 89 00 (tue and wed 13:30-16)

[Equi.sup@cfwb.be](mailto:Equi.sup@cfwb.be)

<http://www.equivalences.cfwb.be/index.php?id=1216>

### German-speaking Community

Ministerium der Deutschsprachigen  
Gemeinschaft  
Gospertstraße 1  
4700 Eupen

+32 (0) 87 596 364 | +32 (0)87 976 706

[http://www.ostbelgienbildung.be/PortalData/21/Resources/downloads/unterrichtsorganisation/gleichstellung\\_diplome/Prozedur\\_der\\_Anerkennung\\_einer\\_Lehrperson\\_DG.pdf](http://www.ostbelgienbildung.be/PortalData/21/Resources/downloads/unterrichtsorganisation/gleichstellung_diplome/Prozedur_der_Anerkennung_einer_Lehrperson_DG.pdf)

# 3. Mobility to Germany

## Preliminary remarks

In Germany, recognition is often organised per *Bundesland*. This means that – depending on where the person concerned wants to work – there is a different authority. The focus in this roadmap is on the *Bundesländer* that border on the Netherlands (North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) and Lower Saxony (Nds.)). Where information is provided that relates to one of the two *Bundesländer*, this is indicated. Will the person in question work somewhere else? Consult the website [anerkennung-in-deutschland.de](http://anerkennung-in-deutschland.de) to find the right competent authority.

## Alternatives instead of a recognition procedure



In North Rhine-Westphalia, it is possible to work without recognition in education, e.g. by working at a private school. One can also work as a *Vertretungslehrer/in*. Although the tasks are the same as those of a teacher, there are consequences, e.g. with regard to appointment and remuneration. There are also other [alternatives](#).



In Lower Saxony it is also possible to work in education without recognition, e.g. at private schools. It is also possible to work as a *Vertretungslehrer/in* (for a limited period of time) or with only one subject within the framework of the [Quereinstieg](#). Although the tasks are the same as those of a teacher, there may be differences in remuneration.

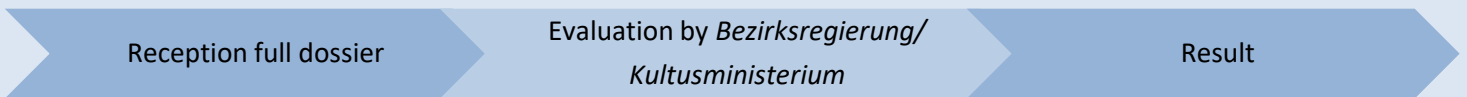
## Step 1 – Submission application for recognition

Submit a full application

- To the *Bezirksregierung Arnsberg* in case of mobility to North Rhine-Westphalia with an [EU diploma](#)
- To the *nds. Kultusministerium* in case of mobility to Lower Saxony with an [EU diploma](#): see the [Merkblatt](#) and the [Erklärungsvordruck](#)

The person concerned will receive a confirmation stating whether any additional documents need to be sent.

## Step 2 – Processing of the dossier



Recognition is mainly based on the teaching qualification, training, and work experience. Authorities assess whether there is equivalence with the learning outcomes in the relevant legislation. For North Rhine-Westphalia these are the “*Lehrerausbildungsgesetz*” and the “*Anerkennungsverordnung Berufsqualifikation Lehramt NRW*”. For Lower Saxony, this is the “*Niedersächsische Beamtengesetz*” ( § 16) and the “*Niedersächsische Laufbahnverordnung*” (§§ 35 ff).

## Step 3 – Result recognition procedure



If recognition cannot take place, compensation measures will be imposed. Such measures are imposed in case of substantial differences. In this case, the differences between German and foreign training are so great that they cannot be bridged by work experience. In practice, this happens quite often; it is only when a person has a lot of work experience that this is not necessary.

## Attention!

- Completeness of documentation is essential: the processing time only starts with a complete file.
- Please note that in Germany more detailed information about the content of the training is generally requested (e.g. content of courses and number of hours). Completeness accelerates the procedure.

Costs	NRW	Nds.
Recognition procedure	Free	Free

## Possible additional costs

Certified translations (NRW and Nds. in case of documentation not in DE)  
 Proof health status and personal aptitude (documents required for employment)

# Mobility to Germany – Continued

## North Rhine-Westphalia

It can be advantageous to work as a *Vertretungslehrer* before the recognition procedure because one gets to know the practice. This can play a positive role during the recognition procedure. In relation to compensation measures, in most cases an adaptation period is followed in NRW. This way, one also works with a potential future employer. In order to follow such an adaptation period, the person involved must demonstrate language proficiency at level C1 at the start of the adaptation period and be able to demonstrate level C2 as soon as possible after the start of the adaptation period. The average duration of the adaptation periods is 12 to 18 months, but they can last up to 3 years. The person concerned will be referred to a *Zentrum für schulpraktische Lehrerausbildung* (ZfsL). If it appears during the adaptation period that the person concerned is progressing quicker, a possible reduction of the adaptation period can be discussed in consultation with the ZfsL. Aptitude tests may also be taken, but are not recommended if the person concerned has little work experience. It is advisable to gain sufficient information from the *Landesprüfungsamt für Lehrämter an Schulen* in Dortmund about the aptitude test: if in the end the test is not passed, recognition in the whole of Germany is no longer possible.

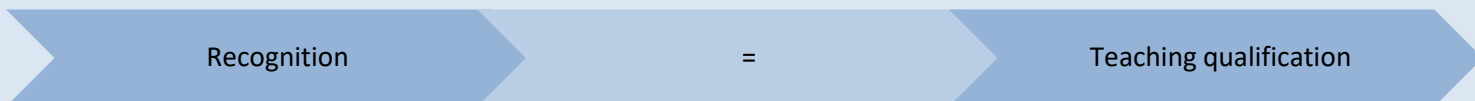
### Common differences

In the Netherlands, secondary school teachers often specialise in a single subject. In NRW and Nds, two subjects are usually required. Only for the subjects of music and art is it possible to teach only one subject.

## Lower Saxony

Adaptation periods or an aptitude tests are possible compensation measures. An adaptation period may consist of university courses and a practical part lasting up to 18 months. A minimum of C1 level language knowledge is required to complete an adaptation period. The aptitude test is a *Staatsprüfung*. However, it is not recommended if certain educational achievements are lacking or if the person concerned does not have any educational experience. It is therefore advisable to gain sufficient information before deciding to take the test. If the test has not been passed successfully, recognition in the whole of Germany is no longer possible.

## Step 4 – Labour market access



The positive decision to grant recognition directly constitutes the teaching qualification with which a person can work. However, a number of documents are requested for employment by a future employer. These documents attest to language skills, good health, and personal aptitude.

## Further information?

The [IQ-Netzwerk](#) offers national advisory services to persons with foreign qualifications looking for recognition. The *Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung* is the [German Assistance Centre](#) for the Professional Qualifications Directive.

## Contact details authorities

North Rhine-Westphalia

### Address

Bezirksregierung Arnsberg

Dezernat 46.2

Laurentiusstraße 1

59821 Arnsberg

[poststelle@bra.nrw.de](mailto:poststelle@bra.nrw.de)

[www.bra.nrw.de/2963815](http://www.bra.nrw.de/2963815)

### Telephone

General: +49 (0)2931 82 3235

Diploma's from:

- NL: +49 (0)2931 82 3215
- BE: +49 (0)2931 82 3259

Lower Saxony

### Adress

Niedersächsisches  
Kultusministerium

Referat 35

Postfach 161

30001 Hannover

### Telephone

General: +49 (0)511 120 0

Teaching at:

- *Gymnasien*: +49 (0)511 120 7263
- *Haupt- und Realschulen*:  
+49 (0)511 120 7271
- *Berufsbildende Schulen*:  
+49 (0)511 120 7257

[poststelle@mk.niedersachsen.de](mailto:poststelle@mk.niedersachsen.de)

[https://www.mk.niedersachsen.de/startseite/service/anerennung\\_auslandischer\\_bildungsabschlusse\\_zeugnisse/anererkennung\\_auslaendischer\\_bildungsabschlusse\\_zeugnisse-6493.html](https://www.mk.niedersachsen.de/startseite/service/anerennung_auslandischer_bildungsabschlusse_zeugnisse/anererkennung_auslaendischer_bildungsabschlusse_zeugnisse-6493.html)

ITEM is an initiative of Maastricht University (UM), the Dutch Centre of Expertise and Innovation on Demographic Changes (NEIMED), Zuyd Hogeschool, the city of Maastricht, the Meuse-Rhine Euregion (EMR) and the (Dutch) Province of Limburg.

Institute for Transnational and Euregional  
cross border cooperation and Mobility / ITEM

Mailing address:

Postbus 616, 6200 MD Maastricht, The Netherlands

Visitors:

Bouillonstraat 1-3, 6211 LH Maastricht, The Netherlands

Avenue Céramique 50, 6221 KV Maastricht, The Netherlands

T: 0031 (0) 43 388 32 33

E: [item@maastrichtuniversity.nl](mailto:item@maastrichtuniversity.nl)

[www.twitter.com/ITEM\\_UM](https://www.twitter.com/ITEM_UM)

[www.itemcrossborderportal.maastrichtuniversity.nl](http://www.itemcrossborderportal.maastrichtuniversity.nl)

