



## Recognition of professional qualifications: Perspectives from the Benelux Union and border regions

**09.10.2025 9.15 – 14.00**

*Secretariat General of the Benelux Union  
Regentschapsstraat 39, 1000 Brussels*

**9:15-9:45 Welcome coffee**

**9:45-10:00 Opening speeches**

- **Frans Weekers**, Secretary General of the Benelux Union
- **Prof. dr. Anouk Bollen-Vandenboorn**, Director of ITEM (Maastricht University)

**10:00-10:15 Introductory keynote**

*Presentation of the ITEM Cross-border Impact Assessment “360° labour market: Challenges and solutions for recognising professional qualifications in border regions”*

- **Susanne Sivonen**, Researcher at ITEM (Maastricht University)

**10:15-11:30 SESSION 1: How to move towards a Benelux area of education & skills?**

**Moderation :** **Prof. dr. Anouk Bollen-Vandenboorn**, Director of ITEM (Maastricht University)

**a. Political reflexions**

- **Brigitte van den Berg**, Member of the European Parliament, NL [*video message*]
- **Patricia Creutz-Vilvoye**, President of the Parliament of the German-speaking Community, Member of the Benelux Parliament
- **Barbara Agostino**, Member of the Luxembourg Chamber of Deputies, Member of the Benelux Parliament

**b. Pitches of successful initiatives & examples of best practices within the Benelux+**

- **Cornelia Schmidt**, Secretary General of the University of the Greater Region  
*Initiatives around joint degrees and cross-border apprenticeships*
- **Rini Romme**, Project leader at the Rijnland Instituut  
*MOVE-certificates to supplement diplomas for an international labour market*
- **Clément Maury**, European and cross-border project manager at the French National Agency for Adult Vocational Training (AFPA)  
*Green Skills and Knowledge for Hydrogen ([GreenSKHy](#)) project*
- **Dr. Nele Witters**, Researcher-coordinator at the Centre for Environmental Sciences (University of Hasselt)  
*Initiatives around circular economy of the network of universities in the Meuse-Rhine Euregion (CrossCircular project)*

**c. How to translate political willingness into reality?**

*A dialogue between elected officials and education stakeholders from the pitch session, leading to closing reflections on how to turn political ambition into concrete outcomes*

**11:30-11:45**      **Coffee break**

**11:45-12:30**      **SESSION 2: Complementarity between the European agenda and the actions undertaken in regional cooperation areas**

**Moderation : Dr. Franz Clément**, Researcher at the Luxembourg Institute of Socio Economic Research (LISER), University of the Greater Region-Center of Border Studies

- **Jean-Claude Meyer**, Deputy Secretary General of the Benelux Union
- **William O’Keeffe**, Policy Officer at DG GROW (European Commission)
- **Pierre Goffin**, International Project Manager at the Public service of Wallonia “Economy Employment Training Research”, President of the “Labour Market” working group of the Greater Region

**12:30-12:40**      **Concluding remarks**

- **Michel-Etienne Tilemans**, Deputy Secretary General of the Benelux Union

**12:40-14:00**      **Networking lunch**

**Language :** English

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**Registration :** [click here](#)

*This event is co-organised with ITEM (Maastricht University),  
in partnership with UniGR-Center for Border Studies*



**ITEM** *10 years  
of expertise*  
Cross-border



**Maastricht University**

