

L A W
No. 8834, date 22.11.2001

**ON THE RATIFICATION OF THE “CONVENTION ON THE RECOGNITION
OF QUALIFICATIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN EUROPE”
(LISBON, 1997)**

Pursuant to Articles 78, 81 item 1, 83 item 1 and 121 of the Constitution, by proposal of the Council of Ministers,

**THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA**

D E C I D E D:

Article 1

The “Convention on the recognition of qualifications of higher education in Europe” is hereby ratified (Lisbon, 1997).

Article 2

This law enters into effect 15 days upon its publication o the Official Gazette.

Promulgated by decree No. 3169, dated 10.12.2001, of the President of the Republic of Albania, Rexhep Meidani.

**CONVENTION
ON THE RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
IN EUROPE**

Lisbon, 1997

The parties present at this Convention:

Having regard to the fact that the right to education is a human right and that higher education, which plays an important role in the attainment and advancement of knowledge, constitutes an extraordinary cultural and scientific asset for both individuals and society;

Having regard to the fact that higher education must play a crucial role in promoting peace, mutual understanding and tolerance and contribute to the creation of mutual trust between peoples and nations;

Bearing in mind the fact that the great diversity of educational systems that exist in Europe is reflected in the cultural, social, political, philosophical, religious and

economic diversities and, from this moment on, represents an extraordinary richness that must be fully respected;

With a view to allowing all Europeans to fully benefit from the richness this diversity represents, by facilitating the participation of the citizens of every state and students of higher education institutions of every Party in the educational resources of other Parties, and especially by allowing them to pursue their development or carry out part of their studies in the higher education institutions of these other Parties;

In view of the fact that the recognition of studies, diplomas and degrees obtained in another European state represents a significant step towards the encouragement of academic mobility among Parties;

Placing high value on the principles of the autonomy of schools and being aware of the necessity of preserving and protecting this principle;

In the belief that equal recognition of qualifications represents a key element of the right to education and a responsibility of society;

Having regard to the Conventions of the Council of Europe and UNESCO in relation to academic recognition in Europe;

The European Convention on the equivalence of diplomas allowing admission to university (1953, ETS No 15) and its additional Protocol (1964, ETS No 49);

The European Convention on the equivalence of university studies (1956, ETS No 21);

The European Convention on the academic recognition of university qualifications (1959, ETS No 32);

The Convention on the recognition of studies and diplomas of higher studies in the States of Europe (1979);

The European Convention on the general equivalence of the period of university studies (1990, ETS No 138);

Furthermore, in view of the International Convention on the recognition of studies, diplomas and higher studies degrees in the Arab States and European States bordering on the Mediterranean (1967), adopted under UNESCO and partially covering academic recognition in Europe;

Taking into account the fact that this Convention must be also considered in the context of the UNESCO International Conventions and Recommendations that cover other parts of the world and the fact that the improved exchange of information among these regions is indispensable;

In view of the profound evolution in higher education in the region of Europe since these Conventions were adopted, resulting in the increase of diversification within and between national systems of higher education, and of the need to adapt the legal instruments and practices to reflect such evolution;

In view of the necessity of finding common solutions to practical problems related to recognition in the European Region;

In view of the necessity to improve the current recognition practices, to make them more transparent and better adapted to the current situation of higher education in the European Region;

With a firm belief in the significance of a convention elaborated and adapted under the joint auspices of the Council of Europe and UNESCO, establishing a framework for the future advancement of recognition practices in the European Region;

In view of the importance of providing permanent mechanisms of implementation, towards the application of the principles and provisions of this Convention,

Have agreed as follows:

Section I. Definitions

Article 1

Pursuant to this Convention, the terms below will have the following meaning:

Admission (into higher education) – is the right of candidates to request and be considered for admission into higher education.

Admission (in the institutions and programmes of higher education) – is the act or system that allows qualified candidates to attend studies in a given institution and/or a given programme of higher education.

Evaluation (of institutions and programmes) – is the process that determines the quality of teaching in an institution or programme of higher education.

Evaluation (of individual qualifications) – a written assessment, by a competent body, of the qualifications of an individual obtained abroad.

Competent authorities of assessment – a body officially responsible of rendering coercive decisions on the recognition of foreign qualifications.

Higher education – all types of study cycles or the entirety of study cycles, of formation or research formation, of post-secondary level, recognized by the relevant authorities of a Party pursuant to its system of higher education.

Higher education institution – an institution propagating higher education and which is recognized by the competent authorities of a Party pursuant to its system of higher education.

Higher education programme – a study cycle recognized by the competent authorities of a Party pursuant to its higher education system and the successful completion of which provides the student with a qualification of higher education.

Study period – every section of a higher education programme which was the object of assessment or validity and which, despite it not being a full study programme per se, represents a significant experience of skill recognition.

Qualification

A. Qualification of higher education. Every award, diploma, acknowledgment or other title issued by a competent authority which proves the successful completion of a programme of higher education.

B. Qualification allowing admission into higher education – every diploma or other acknowledgment issued by a competent authority which proves the successful completion of an education programme and gives the recipient of such title the right to be considered for admission into a higher education institution (see definition of admission).

Recognition – a certification issued by a competent authority substantiating the value of a foreign educational qualification, with the purpose of admission into the

activities of education and/or employment.

The necessary conditions

A. General conditions – conditions that must be fulfilled, in every case, in order to join higher education, to enter a pre-determined level of this education or to obtain a higher education qualification of a given level.

B. Special conditions – conditions that must be fulfilled, besides the general conditions, in order to ensure admission into a special programme of higher education or to obtain a higher education qualification in a specific study discipline.

Section II. Competences of authorities

Article II.1

1. When the central authorities of a Party are competent to decide on matters of recognition, this Party immediately relates to the provisions of this Convention and takes the necessary steps to implement these provisions in its territory.

When competence to decide on matters of recognition rests with components of the Party, the latter submits to one of the depositories a brief report on the situation or its constitutional structure at the time of signing or in the course of depositing its instruments of ratification, admission, adoption or adherence or at another point in time. In such cases, the competent authorities of the component part of the Parties in question take the necessary steps to ensure the implementation of the provisions of this Convention in their territory.

2. When competence to decide individually on matters of recognition rests with higher education institutions or other entities, every Party, in line with the situation or its constitutional structure, communicates the text of this Convention to these institutions or entities and takes every necessary step to encourage them to analyze and implement the provisions in good will.

3. The provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article are applicable *mutatis mutandis* with the obligations of the Parties pursuant to the subsequent Articles of this Convention.

Article II.2

At the time of signing or depositing its instrument of ratification, admission, adoption or adherence, or at any other point in time, every State, the Holy See, the European Community will indicate to one of the depositories of this Convention who the competent authorities are that render various decisions on matters of recognition.

Article II.3

The provisions of this Convention cannot be considered to be contrary to the most favourable provisions in regards to the recognition of qualifications given by one of the Parties. They may be contained in an existing or future treaty, or in one as a result, and part to which a Party of this Convention may become.

Section III. Basic principles for the evaluation of qualifications

Article III.1

1. The holders of qualifications issued by the Parties have an appropriate entry into the evaluation of these qualifications by means of a request by them addressed to a competent body.

2. In this regard, no difference is made in relation to gender, race, skin colour, handicap, language, political or any other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, national minority, wealth, birth or any other circumstance of the requestors, or any other circumstance that is not related to the value of the qualification whose recognition is requested. To ensure this right, every Party pledges to introduce the necessary provisions to evaluate every request for recognition of qualifications, bearing in mind only the knowledge and skills acquired.

Article III.2

Every Party will make sure that the procedures and criteria used in evaluation and recognition are transparent, coherent and reliable.

Article III.3

1. Decisions on recognition are made on the basis of appropriate information related to the qualifications whose recognition is requested.

2. The responsibility of submitting the necessary information lies, first and foremost, with the requestor, who must submit it in good faith.

3. Despite the responsibility of the requestor, by request of the latter, the institutions that have issued said qualifications have the duty to give appropriate information within reasonable time limits. The same duty pertains to the institutions or competent bodies of the country where recognition has been requested.

4. Parties instruct all education institutions, according to their education systems, to forward every reasonable information request for the purpose of the evaluation of the qualifications by these institutions or, as the case may be, encourage these institutions to follow this course of action.

5. It is up to the bodies to undertake an evaluation to verify that a request does not fulfil the necessary conditions.

Article III.4

In order to facilitate the recognition of qualifications, every Party will make sure that necessary and clear information is submitted on their own education system.

Article III.5

Decisions on recognition are rendered within a reasonable deadline, pre-determined by the authorities competent in matters of recognition, starting from the moment when all the required information has been submitted for the request to be reviewed. In the event of a negative decision, the reasons for refusal are stated and the requestor is advised on the steps that can be taken to achieve recognition at a later time. In case of a negative decision or lack of a decision, the requestor must have the opportunity to appeal against this decision within a reasonable deadline.

Section IV. Recognition of qualifications that allow entrance into higher education

Article IV.1

Every Party recognizes (for purposes of entrance into the programmes under its higher education system) the qualifications given by other Parties and which fulfil, in these Parties, the general conditions of access to higher education, only in cases when it can be proved that there is a crucial difference between the general conditions of accession in the Party in which the qualification has been made and in the Party where recognition has been sought.

Article IV.2

Alternatively, it suffices that one Party allows the holder of a qualification completed in one of the Parties to achieve the evaluation of this qualification, by request of the graduate of the qualification, and the provisions of Article IV in this case apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Article IV.3

When the qualification only allows entrance into some types of specific institutions or programmes of higher education in the Party where such qualification has been completed, all the other Parties guarantee the graduate of said qualification access to specific programmes similar to the institutions under its higher education system, with the exception of cases when a crucial difference is proved between the entrance conditions in the Party in which the qualification has been made and the entrance conditions in the Party where the recognition of qualification is requested.

Article IV.4

When admission into special programmes of higher education depends on special conditions complementary to the general conditions, the competent authorities of the

relevant Party may impose the same supplementary conditions to graduates of the qualifications completed in other Parties or deem whether the requestors who have completed qualifications in other Parties fulfil the same conditions.

Article IV.5

When in the other Party, in which high school education diplomas have been obtained, entrance into higher education is allowed only when proof of additional exams is presented, as a preliminary entry condition, the other Parties may condition the entrance by the same requests or offer another alternative that may fulfil these additional requirements in the framework of their educational systems. Every State, the Holy See, the European Community, at the time of signing or at the time of deposition of the instrument of ratification, admission, adoption or adherence, or at any other point in time, may declare to one of the depositories that they are using the provisions of this Article, precisely identifying the Parties against which they intend to use this Article, as well as the reasons justifying this measure.

Article IV.6

Without prejudice to the provisions of Articles IV.1, IV.2, IV.3, IV.4 and IV.5, admission into a given institution of higher education or a given programme of this institution may be limited or selective. When admission into a higher education institution and/or programme is selective, admission procedures should be conceived so as to evaluate foreign qualifications in keeping with the principles of equality and non-discrimination described in Section III.

Article IV.7

Without prejudice to the provisions of Articles IV.1, IV.2, IV.3, IV.4 and IV.5, admission into a given higher education institution can depend on the evidence the requestor possesses. This evidence may be of sufficient knowledge of the language or languages of instruction in the institution in question or other specified languages.

Article IV.8

In Parties where entrance into higher education may be achieved on the basis of non-traditional qualifications, other similar qualifications carried out in other Parties are evaluated in the same manner as non-traditional qualifications completed in the Party where recognition is sought.

Article IV.9

In order to achieve admission into higher education programmes, every Party may accept that the recognition of qualifications completed in a foreign education institution, located in its own territory, is subject to specific conditions of national legislation or specific agreements signed with the Party of origin of the institution in question.

Section V. Recognition of periods of study

Article V.1

Every Party recognizes the periods of study completed in the framework of a programme of higher education in another Party. This recognition includes study periods that aim at the completion of higher education programme in the Party in which recognition is sought, except cases when it can be proved that there is a fundamental difference between the study period completed in another Party and the part of higher education programme they would be substituting in the Party where recognition has been accorded.

Article V.2

Alternatively, it suffices that a Party allows a person who has completed a period of study as part of a higher education programme of another Party to obtain an evaluation for this period of study, by request of the person himself/herself, and the provisions of Article V.1, in this case, are applied *mutatis mutandis*.

Article V.3

Specifically, each Party facilitates the recognition of study periods when:

a) it has a preliminary agreement between, on the one hand, higher education institutions or the competent authority responsible for said study period and, on the other hand the higher education institution or competent authority in matters of recognition, in charge of the recognition sought;

and

b) the higher education institution where the study period has been spent and a certificate or grade list has been issued substantiating that the student has fulfilled the necessary requirements for this period of study.

Section VI. Recognition of qualifications in higher education

Article VI.1

In cases when a decision on recognition is based on the knowledge and expertise substantiated by a higher education qualification, every Party recognizes the qualifications of higher education done by another Party, with the exception of cases when it is corroborated that there is a fundamental difference between the qualification whose recognition is requested and the corresponding qualification in the Party where recognition is sought.

Article VI.2

Alternatively, it suffices that a Party allows the holders of a higher education

qualification, issued by one of the other Parties, to obtain an evaluation of this qualification, by request of the holder, and in this case the provisions of Article VI.3 are applied mutatis mutandis.

Article VI.3

The recognition by one Party of a higher education qualification issued by another Party brings about both or one of the following outcomes:

- a) entrance into supplementary higher studies, including pertinent exams and/or preparing for a doctorate thesis, in the same conditions as those applied to the holders of qualifications of the Party in which recognition has been sought;
- b) the utilization of an academic title in conformity with the laws, rules or jurisdiction of the Party in which recognition has been sought.

Furthermore, recognition can facilitate access to the job market, in keeping with the laws, rules or jurisdiction of the Party in which recognition has been sought.

Article VI.4

The assessment by a Party of a higher education qualification issued by another Party may assume one of the following forms:

- a) assessments unusable for work purposes;
- b) assessments addressed to an education institution for admission into its programmes;
- c) assessments aimed at any other authority competent in matters of recognition.

Article VI.5

Considering the recognition of qualifications of higher education issued by a higher education institution located in its territory, each Party can subject this recognition to specific conditions by the national legislation or specific agreements signed with the Party this institution is subordinate to.

Section VII. Recognition of qualifications of refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation

Article VII

Every Party takes all the possible and reasonable steps in the framework of its own educational system, pursuant to its constitutional, legal and administrative provisions, to develop apposite procedures that allow a fair and efficient evaluation of whether refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation fulfil the required conditions to enter into higher education, to pursue supplementary higher education programmes or to exercise a professional activity, and for the same to be the case even when the qualifications done by one Party cannot be substantiated by proper

documents.

Section VIII. Information on the evaluation of higher education institutions and programmes

Article VIII.1

Each Party submits the necessary information on every institution under its higher education system, as well as on every programme organized by these institutions, in order to give the competent authorities of other Parties the opportunity to verify whether the quality of qualifications issued by these institutions justifies recognition in the Party in which recognition has been sought. Such information appears as below:

a) in the case of Parties that have established an official system of evaluation for higher education institutions and programmes; information on the methods and results of this assessment and the norms of specific quality for every type of higher education institution that issues higher education qualifications and their programmes;

b) in the case of Parties that have not established an official system of evaluation for higher education institutions and programmes; information on the recognition of various qualifications carried out at every institution or through every programme within their higher education system.

Article VIII.2

Each Party adopts the necessary provisions to define, restore and distribute:

a) a typology of the various types of higher education institutions incorporated under the respective system of higher education, including specific features for every type of institution;

b) a list of institutions (public and private) recognized as dependent on the respective education system, specifying their capacity to provide various types of qualifications, as well as the conditions required for entrance into any type of institution and programme;

c) a description of higher education programmes;

d) a list of education institutions located outside its territory, which it considers as incorporated (dependent on) its education system.

Section IX. Information on matters of recognition

Article IX.1

In order to facilitate the recognition of higher education qualifications, the Parties are committed to establish transparent systems that allow a full description of the qualifications provided.

Article IX.2

1. In view of the necessity of appropriate, accurate and updated information, every Party creates or maintains a national information centre and informs one of the depositories on this 'creation' or any related modifications.

2. In each Party, the National Information Centre:

- a) facilitates the acquirement of accurate and reliable information on the higher education system and qualifications of the country in which it is located;
- b) facilitates the acquirement of information on higher education systems and qualifications of other Parties;
- c) provides advice or information on the recognition and evaluation of qualifications, in respect of national laws and rules.

3. Every national information centre must have the necessary means available to conduct its functions.

Article IX.3

The Parties encourage, with the mediation of national information centres or other means, the utilization by higher education institutions of Parties the Supplement of the UNESCO Diploma, the Council of Europe or any other comparable document.

Section X. Implementation mechanisms

Article X.1

The bodies below oversee, promote and facilitate the implementation of the Convention:

- a) The Convention Committee on the recognition of higher education qualifications in the region of Europe;
- b) The European Network of National Information Centres on academic recognition and mobility (the ENIC network established by a decision of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 9 June 1994 and the UNESCO Regional Committee for Europe on 18 June 1994).

Article X.2

1. The Convention Committee on the recognition of higher education qualifications in the European region (hereinafter "Committee") is established by this Convention. It is composed by one representative for each Party.

2. As concerns Article X.2, the term "Party" does not apply to the European Community.

3. If the states mentioned in Article XI.1.1 and the Holy See are not part of this Convention, the European Community and the President of the ENIC network may participate in the meetings of the Committee as observers. Representatives of government and non-government organizations operating in the recognition domain in the region may be invited to participate in the Committee meetings as observers.

4. Even the President of the UNESCO Regional Committee for the implementation of the Convention on the recognition of higher education studies and diplomas in States pertaining to the Region of Europe will be invited to participate in the meetings of the Committee as an observer.

5. The Committee promotes the application of this Convention and oversees its implementation. To this end, it may adopt, by a majority of Parties, recommendations, statements, protocols and practical codes to assist the competent authorities of Parties in the implementation of the Convention and the review of requests for recognition of higher education qualifications. Even though they are not bound by these books, the Parties will not spare attempts to implement, bring to the attention of competent authorities and encourage their application. The Committee will solicit an opinion from the ENIC network before rendering its decisions.

6. The Committee reports to the relevant instances of the Council of Europe and UNESCO.

7. The Committee provides the connection with the regional UNESCO committees for the implementation of conventions on the recognition of higher education studies, diplomas and degrees adopted under the patronage of UNESCO.

8. A quorum is reached when the majority of Parties are present.

9. The Committee adopts its internal regulation. It assembles in an ordinary session at least once every three years. The Committee assembles for the first time within the year following the date of entry into effect of this Convention.

10. The Secretariat of the Committee is jointly entrusted to the General Secretary of the Council of Europe and the General Director of UNESCO.

Article X.3

1. Each Party appoints as members of the European Network of National Education Centres on academic mobility and recognition (ENIC Network, the National Information Centre established or maintained by the Party, pursuant to Article IX.2; all these centres are members of the Network, but these national information centres have only one vote.

2. The ENIC Network, in its composition of national information centres of the Parties to this Convention, offers support and assistance in the practical implementation of the Convention by the competent national authorities. The Network assembles at least once a year in a plenary session. It elects its President and Bureau pursuant to its mandate.

3. The Secretariat of ENIC Network is jointly entrusted to the General Secretary of the Council of Europe and the General Director of UNESCO.

4. The Parties cooperate, through the ENIC Network, with the information centres of other Parties, enabling the acquirement of any information necessary for the operation of national information centres in relation to academic recognition and mobility.

Section XI. Final provisions

Article XI.1

1. This Convention shall be open for signature by:
 - a) Council of Europe member States;
 - b) States that are members of the UNESCO Region of Europe;
 - c) any other signatory, contracting State or Party of the cultural European Convention of the Council of Europe and/or the UNESCO Convention on the recognition of higher education studies and diplomas in the States of the European Region, which are invited to participate in the diplomatic Conference in charge of adopting this Convention.
2. These States and the Holy See may express their approval to be bound by:
 - a) signature, without reservation as to ratification, acceptance or approval; or
 - b) signature, subject to ratification, acceptance or approval, followed by ratification, acceptance or approval; or
 - c) accession.
3. The signing will take place before a depository. The instruments of ratification, acknowledgment, endorsement or adherence will be filed with one of the depositories.

Article XI.2

This Convention will come into effect on the first day of the month following the expiry of the one-month deadline after the expression of approval of five States, of which at least three are member States of the Council of Europe and/or the UNESCO Europe Region, to be bound to this Convention. It will enter into effect, for all other states, on the first day of the month following the one-month expiry after the date of expression of approval to be bound to this Convention.

Article XI.3

1. Upon entry into effect of this Convention, every State except those belonging to one of the categories listed in Article XI.1, will be able to present a petition for adherence to the Convention. Every request/petition will be communicated to one of the depositories, who will report to the Parties at least once every three months before the meeting of the Convention Committee on the recognition of higher education qualifications in the European Region. The depository will also inform the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the UNESCO Executive Council.
2. The decision to invite a State that has submitted a petition to adhere to this Convention will be rendered by over two thirds of the Parties.
3. Once this Convention comes into effect, the European Community may accede to it following a request of its member States addressed to one of the depositories. Under these circumstances, Article XI.3.2 does not apply.
4. For every adhering State, and for the European Community, the Convention will enter into effect on the first day of the month following the expiry of the one-month deadline after the date of deposition of the adherence instrument with one of the depositories.

Article XI.4

1. The Parties in this Convention, which are simultaneously Parties to one or several of the following Conventions:

The European Convention on the equivalence of diplomas allowing entrance into university institutions (1953, STE No 15) and its Protocol (1964, STE No 49);

The European Convention on the equivalence of university study periods (1956, STE No 21);

The European Convention on the academic recognition of university qualifications (1959, STE No 32);

The International Convention on the recognition of higher education studies, diplomas and degrees in Arab States and European States bordering on the Mediterranean (1976);

The Convention on the recognition of higher education studies and diplomas in the States of the Europe Region (1979);

The European Convention on the general equivalence of the period of university studies (1990, STE 138);

- a) shall implement the provisions of this Convention in their mutual relations;
- b) shall continue to implement the aforementioned conventions, which they are Parties to, in their relations with other States that are Parties to the aforementioned conventions but not to this Convention.

2. The Parties of this Convention commit to abstaining from being Parties to the conventions mentioned in paragraph 1, to which they would not yet be Parties to, with the exception of the International Convention on the recognition of higher education studies, diplomas and degrees in Arab States and European States bordering on the Mediterranean.

Article XI.5

1. Every State can determine the territory or territories in which this Convention is applicable at the time of signing or deposition of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession to the Convention.

2. At any other time, any State can extend the application of this Convention to any other territory by means of a declaration addressed to one of the depositaries. The Convention will come into effect, for this territory, on the first day of the month following the expiry of a one-month deadline, starting from the date said declaration is received by the depositary.

3. Every declaration made pursuant to the two paragraphs above, for every territory referred to by such declaration, may be retracted by means of a note addressed to one of the depositaries. It will be effective as of the first day of the month following the expiry of a one-month deadline upon the date of receipt of such note by one of the depositaries.

Article XI.6

1. Each Party may denounce this Convention at any time by means of a note

addressed to one of the depositories.

2. The denouncement will be effective as of the first day of the month following the expiry of a twelve-month deadline upon the date of receipt of the note by the depository. Nevertheless, such denouncement will not affect earlier decisions on recognition brought pursuant to the provisions of this Convention.

3. The revocation of this Convention or suspension of its implementation as a result of the violation by a Party of a provision fundamental to the achievement of the objective or the purpose of the Convention will be done pursuant to international laws.

Article XI.7

1. Every State, the Holy See, the European Community may declare that they reserve the right not to implement, in part or in full, one or several of the following Articles of this Convention. Such reservation can be noted at the time of signing or deposition of the instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession to the Convention. The Articles under reserve:

Article IV.8

Article V.3

Article VI.3

Article VIII.2

Article IX.3

There can be no other reserves.

2. Every Party that has formulated a reserve pursuant to the aforementioned paragraph can retract it, in part or in full, by means of a note addressed to one of the depositories. The retraction comes into effect on the date of receipt of said note by the depository.

3. A Party that has formulated a reserve towards a provision of this Convention cannot expect its implementation by another Party; however, it may claim the implementation of this provision to an extent it accepts, in the case of a partial or limited reserve.

Article XI.8

1. The Convention Committee on the recognition of higher education qualifications in the European Region can adopt amendment projects for this Convention by means of a decision rendered by over two thirds of the Parties. Every amendment passed in this fashion is included in a protocol of this Convention. The protocol specifies the modalities of its entry into effect which, just in case, requires the approval of the Parties in order to bind them to said protocol.

2. No amendment can be made to Section III of this Convention in view of the procedure in paragraph 1 above.

3. Every proposal for amendments must be communicated to one of the depositories, who will forward it to the Parties at least three months before the meeting of the Committee. The depository will also inform the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the UNESCO Executive Council.

Article XI.9

1. The General Secretary of the Council of Europe and the General Director of the United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization are the depositories of this Convention.

2. The depository with whom an act, note or communiqué has been deposited will inform the Parties to this Convention, as well as other member States of the Council of Europe and/or the UNESCO Europe Region on:

1. every signature;
2. the deposition of every instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession;
3. every date of entry into effect of this Convention pursuant to the provisions of Articles XI.2 and XI.3.4;
4. any reservation noted towards the implementation of the provisions of Article XI.7 and the retraction of every reserve to the implementation of the provisions of Article XI.7;
5. any denouncement of this Convention in application of Article XI.6;
6. any declaration made pursuant to the provisions of Article II.1 or Article II.2;
7. any declaration made pursuant to the provisions of Article IV.5;
8. any petition for accession forwarded pursuant to Article XI.3;
9. any proposal made pursuant to Article XI.8;
10. any other act, note or communiqué related to this Convention.

3. The depository that receives a communiqué or proceeds following a note pursuant to the provisions of this Convention will immediately inform the other depositories.

The signatory, fully authorized, representatives, have signed this Convention in good faith.

Made in Lisbon, on 11 April 1997, in the English, French, Russian and Spanish languages, all four texts equally valid, in two copies, one of which will be deposited in the archives of the Council of Europe and the other in the archives of the United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization, and one notarized copy will be distributed to all States mentioned in Article XI.I, the Holy See and the European Community, as well as the Secretariat of the United Nations Organization.

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