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**Abstract**

Professional mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) are one of the policy instruments employed in global and regional trade agreements to facilitate the mobility of skilled labour. While such agreements have been noted in the literature examining cross-border academic mobility, little is known about how they impact higher education. This paper examines the formation of professional MRAs in North America since the passing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), focusing on three fields: engineering, architecture, and accounting. In the three professions, asymmetries characterizing the NAFTA partners led to system-level reforms in Mexico. The paper discusses how and why the institutional arrangements governing professional higher education in the country were 'harmonized' with those of the United States and Canada. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)