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Governance of institutions of higher education in the European Higher Education Area

Motion for a recommendation

tabled by Mr Gvozden Srećko FLEGO and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

The Council of Europe has contributed significantly to the Bologna Process for the creation of a European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The Bologna Process has been initiated and carried out by education ministries in Council of Europe member states. It is the single most important project concerning higher education in Europe today and will impact future generations of Europeans as well as Europe's position in a globalised knowledge society.

The introduction of Bachelor and Master degrees in the EHEA has caused strong criticism from students and teachers in some countries. Students, academic staff and parliaments have not been associated sufficiently with the Bologna Process, in order to take wide ownership of this process.

For centuries, university autonomy and academic freedom have been fundamental principles of the university systems in Europe and are guaranteed in national constitutions. The Magna Charta Universitatum also reflects those principles. Institutions of higher education are free to organise themselves and their academic work, subject to the public recognition of the studies and degrees offered by them. Students are free to organise their course of studies, subject to the requirements for the award of academic degrees.

Therefore, the Parliamentary Assembly recommends that university autonomy and academic freedom should be integrated into the principles of the EHEA and the related standards set by the Council of Europe. Students and academic staff should be closely associated with the further development of the EHEA.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
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