Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 2005 (2012)[1]
Final version

The consolidation and international openness of the European Higher Education Area

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly, referring to its Resolution 1906 (2012) on the consolidation and international openness of the European Higher Education Area, welcomes the Committee of Ministers' initiatives aimed at strengthening dialogue between public authorities, academia, student representatives and civil society with a view to better defining the Council of Europe's contribution to the Bologna Process. The Assembly also welcomes the representation of the Organisation in the Bologna Follow-up Group and values the assistance provided for the development of national qualifications frameworks in a number of Council of Europe member States.

2. The Assembly strongly believes that the role of the Council of Europe in the field of higher education is crucial and irreplaceable. Despite the present difficult budgetary context and the constraints it entails, the Council of Europe should continue to support higher education reforms aimed at meeting the goals of the Bologna Process and at consolidating the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

3. Referring to its Resolution 1907 (2012) on governance of higher education institutions in the European Higher Education Area, the Assembly stresses the importance of preserving and strengthening the independence of higher education institutions and academic freedom as fundamental principles for the EHEA.

4. The Assembly therefore invites the Committee of Ministers to:

4.1. reflect the strategic importance of higher education in its decisions on the Council of Europe programme of activities and continue to ensure the active participation of the Council of Europe in the implementation of the EHEA and in the Bologna Process;

4.2. ask its competent steering committee to:

4.2.1. study the relationship and interaction between qualifications frameworks, recognition of qualifications and quality assurance, and identify measures needed to ensure coherence in the implementation of the EHEA instruments;

4.2.2. study the feasibility of devising a pan-European mechanism aimed at facilitating the recognition of qualifications, such as a European qualifications passport;

4.2.3. consider ways and means of fostering the exchange of good practices in higher education reform between EHEA member countries and non-EHEA countries;

4.3. strengthen co-operation with the European Union in this area, in order to provide targeted support for the consolidation of the EHEA in the countries that have joined the EHEA recently and to provide assistance in reaching the objectives of the Bologna Process, including in terms of academic mobility.

1. Assembly debate on 5 October 2012 (36th Sitting) (see Doc. 13009, report of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, rapporteur: Mr Huseynov). Text adopted by the Assembly on 5 October 2012 (36th Sitting).