



EU Insight - Council conclusions on the global dimension of European higher education

On November 26th, 2013, the education ministers of the European Union Council of Ministers adopted two sets of Council conclusions on effective leadership in education and on the global dimension of European higher education.

“The EU has a joint vision on the importance of these two issues and will work together towards the same goals. During its Presidency, Lithuania hosted high-level events dedicated to effective leadership and the globalization of European higher education, during which the matters were considerably furthered”, the Lithuanian Minister said.

In this article, we shall focus on the conclusions drawn in the policy declaration regarding the global dimension of European higher education.

The policy declaration was developed over the course of several earlier meetings and contains suggestions made by the Council to the Member States on cooperating with higher education institutions to:

1. Pursue comprehensive strategic approaches towards internationalisation, in cooperation with the relevant stakeholders, which cover three main areas:
 - a. student and staff mobility
 - b. the internationalization of curricula and digital learning
 - c. strategic cooperation, partnerships and capacity-building
2. Promote two-way international degree and credit mobility for students, as well as provide opportunities for staff mobility between Europe and third countries [...]

The Council welcomes the Commission’s efforts to exploit the opportunities for international higher education cooperation within the Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020 programmes. This could, for example, happen through increased financial support through Erasmus+ for the mobility of learners and staff, but also through the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions under Horizon 2020 for the mobility of researchers to and from third countries.



The declaration also states that EU governments should support “the recognition of credits, degrees, qualifications and competences gained abroad by internationally mobile students, researchers and staff ...”, as well as create guidance and counseling services helping academics work abroad.

Furthermore, the systems of ‘European Credit Transfer and Accumulation’, the ‘Diploma Supplement’ and the ‘European Qualifications Framework’ should be supported, while backing reforms to EU directives helping non-EU nationals enter Member States for research and studies.

The ministers stressed the need to encourage a “coordinated action and strategic partnerships” among European universities – including through the new Erasmus+ programme – in order to ensure the competitiveness of European higher education institutions in the digital race.

Sources:

[1] [University World News](#)

[2] [Press statement: Council of the European Union](#)

[3] [Draft Council conclusions on the global dimension of European higher education](#)