

Adopted 10 June 2017, Zagreb

**General Committee on Social Development, Education, Research and Science of
the Parliamentary Assembly of the South East European Cooperation Process
(SEECP PA)**

RESOLUTION

Reaffirming the principles established in the Charter of good neighborly relations, stability, security and cooperation, signed in Bucharest in 2000, as the founding document of SEECP;

Pursuant to the Declaration on the Inauguration of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly adopted on 10 May 2014;

Guided by the Rules of Procedure of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly which establish the functioning of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly;

In accordance with the SEECP PA Work Program 2016/2017 adopted in June 2016 in Sofia;

Having regard to the existing practices in the field of higher education in the SEECP Participants;

Having in mind that the integration of Southeast Europe as a whole in the European Union represents one of the most important mechanisms for ensuring peace, stability and progress of the region;

Reaffirming the importance of the enlargement process and commitment of reforms initiated by the SEECP Participants especially in the field of higher education as part of their efforts invested within the EU integration process;

Emphasising the relevance and importance of efficient mechanisms for the continuation of parliamentary cooperation, particularly in the field of higher education;

Recognising the need for reinforcing cooperation among higher education authorities in the SEECP Participants aimed at enhancing the regional cooperation in the field of higher education;

Recalling the Final Declaration of the Third Plenary Session of the South-East European Cooperation Process Parliamentary Assembly, 10-11 June 2016, Sofia, which reaffirms the importance and the role of parliaments in encouraging the exchange of expertise and experience with SEECP parliaments of non EU Member States;

Highlighting that the SEECP PA can play an important role in assisting the parliaments of the SEECP Participants to harmonize their own legislative framework with the EU *acquis* by developing a comprehensive exchange of best practices, knowledge and experience with the Parliaments of EU Member States;

Noting that an increase in the intensity and the institutionalization of parliamentary dialogue is the key to addressing the challenges faced and to establishing a comprehensive higher education perspective for South East Europe;

Underlining the importance of internationalization of higher education as a means of improving the quality of higher education through the opportunities presented by the information age;

Appreciating the high level of participation of SEECP Participants in existing mechanisms for cooperation in higher education both in bilateral and multilateral levels such as the Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area;

Welcoming the current level of integration achieved in the field of higher education by means of the Bologna Process which is an important process of harmonizing various systems of European higher education with an objective to create a European Area of Higher Education and to promote the European system of higher education on a worldwide scale in order to increase its international competitiveness.

The General Committee on Social Development, Education, Research and Science, which was convened in İstanbul, on 21 April 2017:

Encourages the enhancement of regional cooperation among SEECP Participants in the field of higher education by exchange of best practices and experience in the field;

Calls on SEECP Participants to promote institutional cooperation and enhance administrative capacities in higher education, as well as adoption of common policy measures aimed at improving institutional cooperation;

Invites SEECP Participants to take relevant measures in order to ensure full accessibility for the people with disabilities to higher education;

Call for more efficient implementation of education reforms, particularly in the area of higher education with a view to comply with the principles laid down by the European integration process and the Bologna Process;

Highlights the need to contribute to the internationalization of higher education by strengthening the existing networks of cooperation among SEECP participants in higher education in line with the Bologna Process;

Calls upon SEECP Participants to utilize the opportunities provided by EU programs such as Erasmus + and Horizon2020 more productively with a view to improve strategic partnerships among SEECP Participants by increasing mobility among themselves;

Encourages cooperation among National Agencies and National Erasmus Offices of SEECP Participants with a view to enhance the effectiveness of Erasmus+ programs;

Urges SEECP Participants to contribute more actively to the modernization of higher education by means of the adoption of innovative approaches such as digitalization, formation of joint degree and programs, project based internationalization and internationalization and exchange of university curricula;

Calls upon SEECP Participants to increase their efforts for ensuring the recognition of professional qualifications in line with the Bologna Process;

Recommends to SEECP Participants to adopt measures aimed at facilitating the mutual recognition of diplomas and qualifications through intensification of efforts for the negotiation and finalization of agreements in all levels and in all forms.