

A g r e e m e n t

Enhancing crossborder cooperation between universities

Analyzing the crossborder cooperation between universities in Central European countries, the representatives of the Rectors' Conferences of Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia and Austria in their meeting on 23 February 2001, organized by the Austrian Rectors' Conference, state:

1. Crossborder cooperation in the six countries has been traditionally very successful due to the regional, cultural and historical similarities.
2. Bilateral and multilateral regional cooperations have improved during the last ten years. They should be organised directly between the universities, as well as between national and local authorities.
3. The need is expressed to improve crossborder cooperation in EU-Programmes with respect to the European Higher Education Space and the European Research Area.
4. To ensure an active position, the autonomy of the university is required in an institutional, academic and financial sense according to the European standard. This European standard is defined by the principles of the *Magna Charta Universitatum* and should be understood in a dynamic sense to meet the challenges of the future.
5. The universities need support to establish their institutional autonomy that will enable them to take part in crossborder cooperation. Neither political authorities and economic powers, nor internal units should limit the university's full institutional authority in crossborder cooperation.

6. The Rectors' Conferences of the six countries have agreed to cooperate on multilateral level, especially in the following fields:

- to launch a crossborder cooperation programme, including the non-university sector;
- to initiate joint efforts concerning the cooperation in the Fifth and Sixth Framework Programmes of the EU, especially in creating specific networks;
- to enhance students' and staff mobility through cooperation, for instance by mutual recognition.

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