Higher education: cooperation with third countries

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The committee unanimously adopted the report by Marielle DE SARNEZ (EPP-ED, F) on the Commission communication. The report said that the EU needed to provide high-quality education to boost its competitiveness in the international education market and must try to ensure equal quality of education and reception facilities throughout the European higher education world. To this end MEPs called on the Commission to consider, in conjunction with the European University Association, the introduction of a European 'quality label', to be awarded by a group of international experts and to cover a whole range of transnational teaching modules. Given that language remains an obstacle to mobility, the committee recommended that Member States include foreign language teaching in the form of modules in all higher education courses. However, student mobility was only one aspect of cooperation programmes: exchanges of teaching staff, the creation of joint study programmes and the development of systems for the mutual recognition of study courses and qualifications were also important. The committee called on the EU to promote joint study courses between universities in the Member States, leading to the award of joint qualifications, and in particular asked the Commission to continue improving and promoting the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).