Further European cooperation in quality assurance in higher education

2004/0239(COD) - 30/08/2005

The committee adopted the report by Ljudmila NOVAK (EPP-ED, SI) broadly approving the proposal under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure, subject to a number of amendments:

- **Recommendation A** (Internal quality assurance mechanisms): these mechanisms should be developed in accordance with the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area adopted in Bergen in the context of the Bologna Process;

- **Recommendation B** (Common set of standards, procedures and guidelines): the common system should be devised in cooperation with representatives of the higher education community and applied in such a way as to protect and promote diversity and innovation, in particular by acknowledging universities' right to offer quality programmes that are different or more innovative than standard programmes;

- **Recommendation D** (Licensing): Member States should give the higher education institutions operating on their territory the opportunity to choose an agency in their own country or a foreign agency on the European register, provided this is permitted in their own country by rules or an agreement to this effect with the relevant ministry;

- **Recommendation E** (Complementary assessment / assessment abroad): the committee drew a distinction between licensing and complementary assessment and wanted higher education institutions to be encouraged to work towards a complementary trans-national assessment or accreditation by an international agency in the European register, with a view to boosting their international reputation;

- the committee introduced two new recommendations on promoting cooperation between agencies and making public the results of the assessments made by the agencies.

Lastly, MEPs introduced a new provision whereby, in the event of an initial refusal of registration, agencies can submit themselves for reassessment after making the necessary improvements.