

ENOHE STRASBOURG DECLARATION

**Proposal by the European Network of Ombudsmen in Higher Education
(ENOHE)
to the Ministerial Conference and Bologna Forum 2018 in Paris, France
as agreed upon at the 13th ENOHE Annual Conference in Strasbourg, France
on June 30, 2017**

Quality assurance and public responsibility are growing issues for higher education institutions as they seek to align to the social and political challenges of modern society. Making the higher education system inclusive is a key priority within the European Higher Education Area as population profiles adjust to demographic change and social movement across national borders.

Within this context, pan-European cooperation in higher education has two main goals: the preparation of students for life as active citizens in a democratic society; and their preparation for successful participation in the labour market. To achieve these goals, EHEA countries are adapting their structures to make higher education institutions more open to participation in decision processes through changes to governance.

Hence the European Network of Ombudsmen in Higher Education [ENOHE], first established in 2003 and now consisting of affiliates in more than 20 countries, endorses the further extension of the institution of higher education ombudsmen as beacons for safeguarding a fair, inclusive and transparent higher education system throughout the continent. Ombudsmen also contribute to an improvement of the governance and the quality of higher education institutions.

The participants in **ENOHE's 13th annual conference in Strasbourg in June 2017** respectfully propose to the ministerial meeting in Paris in May 2018 that their closing documents include a **recommendation on the installation, by law or respective national regulations, of ombudsmen in higher education**. This is in order to help individuals (mostly students, but also academics and staff) to have resources at their disposal to access: support, listening capacity, and help through appropriate procedures for the independent adjudication or mediation of disputes; and to resolve upcoming issues in daily life at higher education institutions fairly, consistently, and efficiently.