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**Abstract**

This article suggests that the first step towards making the European area for higher education a reality, as called for by the Bologna Declaration of June 1999, is for universities to form networks. These can consist of many types with many aims and scopes: local networks, national networks, continental networks, and global networks. The need for networking is driven by the communications revolution, deregulation, and enhanced global competition in a world that increasingly commoditizes educational offerings. Networking in such an environment is at least a survival mechanism, but it also becomes a form of product and efficiency enhancement. A serious barrier to networking in Europe is the multiplicity of languages. Two solutions to this problem, other than the eventual development of high-performance translation technologies, is institutional linguistic networking and the development of generalized trilingualism. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)