

Abolishing of roaming costs and mutual recognition of university diplomas and professional qualifications between EU and the Western Balkan countries

The Council of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party convening in Bratislava, Slovakia on 3rd December 2022:

Notes that:

- since 1 July 2021, all roaming tariffs have been removed throughout Western Balkans region, similar to the concept of “Roam like at Home” within the EEA;
- in late 2021, the Regional Cooperation Council announced that it would start working with the EU on reducing roaming charges between the Western Balkans and the EU, without concrete results to date;
- on 2 November 2022 in Berlin, as part of Berlin Process summit the Western Balkans countries signed Agreements on the recognition of university diplomas and on the recognition of licenses for professions that are most lacking in the labour market between Western Balkan countries. Similar agreements do not exist with the EU.

Acknowledging that:

- the free roaming zone between EU and the Western Balkans will be mutually beneficial, will improve mobility, cooperation, development, integration and is a stepping stone in the digital transformation of the region. This is a significant step of the Western Balkans in aligning with the EU Digital Single Market principles and practices;
- the mutual recognition of university diplomas and professional qualifications between EU and the Western Balkan countries will align with the principles of the European Higher Education Area outlined in the Bologna process Communiqués and the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region.

Calls for:

- introducing the concept of "Roam like at Home" between EU and Western Balkans by the end of 2023, removing all roaming tariffs, including surcharge to the domestic retail price for calls, SMS & data while roaming in foreseen period;
- urgent mutual recognition of university diplomas and professional qualifications between EU and the Western Balkan countries by end of 2023;

Resolution:

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- urgent introduction of this items on the agenda for the EU- Western Balkans summit on 6 December 2022 in Tirana.

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