

20 Turks educated at College of Europe per year: EU Minister

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Turkish Minister of EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Egemen Bagis on Thursday hosted a dinner in Istanbul for representatives of companies and institutions who provide financial assistance to Turkish students with scholarships so they can attend graduate programs at the College of Europe.

Speaking at the dinner, Egemen Bagis underlined that 20 Turkish students have gotten educated at the College of Europe per year on average over the past three years.

At the end of an education of one year, Turkish students become experts on the EU, Bagis stressed.

"Three years ago, I visited the campus of the College of Europe in Belgium's Brugge city. After seeing that there were only two Turkish students studying there, I decided to begin to work so as to increase the number of Turkish students studying at the College of Europe," Bagis said.

"I felt that a country (Turkey) wishing to become an EU member had to educate and train more EU experts. After returning to Turkey, I sent letters to our dear businesspeople expressing how I felt in Brugge. Thank you for not refusing our request for financial assistance," Bagis stated.

"Experts getting educated at the College of Europe get employed in Turkey's EU Ministry, various public institutions, the private sector, civil society organizations and universities," Bagis also said.

"Turkey has a place in Europe"

Also speaking at the dinner, the Rector of the College of Europe Prof. Dr. Paul Demaret said that "only three weeks after our first meeting with Mr. Bagis, ten scholarships were made available to Turkish students."

"I was highly impressed by the work you (Bagis) and your team accomplished," Dr. Demaret indicated.

"We educate Turkish youth at the College of Europe in diverse fields, ranging from economics to law. Our college makes a modest contribution to Turkey's getting closer to the EU," Dr. Demaret noted.

"I am now a European who believes that Turkey has a place in Europe," Dr. Demaret stated.

"Turkey has a right to be a part of Europe when certain conditions have been met and Europe should not treat Turkey differently than other candidate countries. Turkey's entrance into Europe would be a major accomplishment for Europe. Turkey's entrance into Europe would make the European Union more important from a geopolitical perspective," Dr. Demaret also said.

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