

European Parliament President opens academic year at the College of Europe

Press Release

Bruges

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European Parliament President, Antonio Tajani, delivered the opening address for the inauguration of the academic year at the College of Europe in Bruges this evening. The ceremony was presided by the President of the Administrative Council of the College of Europe, Íñigo Mendez de Vigo.

An excerpt from President Tajani's speech:

"The first reform that must be made is to return to politics that is courageous enough to decide and make choices. Discontent in Europe is growing because the Union has not given our citizens the answers they were waiting for. We must change and return to a Europe of politics, in which civil servants have a natural role as part of an administrative machine that carries out instructions carried out by those elected by the people.

"That is why the European Parliament must also be given the power of legislative initiative. It is no longer acceptable for representatives elected by the European citizens to be the only ones not able to put forward legislative proposals.

This reinforces the mistaken impression among our citizens that a select few without democratic legitimacy make decisions for everyone in Europe.

He concluded his address to the assembled students of the College of Bruges:

"The advice I give you, as a father of children your age, is to be courageous. Courage, the one genuinely great strength, comes not only from the head, but above all from the heart. If each of us believes in European values and principles, we can overcome obstacles that seem impossible. Dare, do not be afraid to fight for your ideas and to confront yourselves with others. No one, if you are right, can make you withdraw. Europe is driven by the freedom for which great women and men have given their lives. Today, fortunately, you are not called to defend it with your life, but these values remain that must be defended with your heads and hearts. If each of us firmly believes in the founding values of Europe, we will allow ourselves and those around us to be free."

**To watch the speech in full, please click [here](#).
For further information:**

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