

Guidelines for quality free online courses drawn up

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Europe, Med area to cooperate for ‘democratization of knowledge’

Rome, November 30 - Open education experts met in Rome on Monday to draw up guidelines for the creation of quality free online university courses making knowledge equally accessible to European and Mediterranean-area countries. The guidelines are to be set out in the Rome Charter, which will be shared with the European Commission departments dealing with higher education and new technologies. "Europe needs relaunching with respect to the democratisation of knowledge access," Maria Amata Garito, rector of the International telematics University Uninettuno, said. Her higher education institute currently offers over 200 open-access courses in English, French, Italian, Greek and Arabic on its website. In Europe universities should develop on-line courses in conjunction with leading higher education institutes in the Arab world and in north African countries to create common content and methodologies, Garito said. With quality courses "all these countries will become absolute protagonists at the frontier of new knowledge markets" in competition with the current "cultural imperialism" of the United States, she added. photo: Education Minister Stefania Giannini