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**Author**

KARRAN, Terence

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**Abstract**

Using comparative data from 23 states within the European Union (EU), this paper is a preliminary assessment of the protection for, and (by extension) the health of, academic freedom in the universities of the nations of the EU. The paper examines constitutional and legislative protection for academic freedom, along with legal regulations concerning institutional governance, the appointment of the Rector and the existence of academic tenure, in order to create a composite picture of the health of academic freedom in the universities within the EU nations. Additionally, the paper considers how this preliminary analysis could be extended through possible further research to aid refinement of the results, and thereby protect and strengthen academic freedom in Europe. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)