



## **İSTANBUL BİLGİ UNIVERSITY CONFERRED THE TITLE OF DOCTOR HONORIS CAUSA UPON EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT PRESIDENT MARTIN SCHULZ**

***İstanbul Bilgi University conferred upon Martin Schulz, the President of the European Parliament, an Honorary Doctorate in Political Science, on May 29, 2012. The ceremony took place in the Museum of Contemporary Arts at the Santral Campus, with the participation of Egemen Bağış, the Minister for European Affairs and Chief Negotiator, leading names from Academia, civil society, business, politics, and students.***

The President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Political Science by İstanbul Bilgi University, for his contributions to the European political integration on the basis of universal values of democracy and civil liberties, his distinguished political career and his principled and consistent attitude towards Turkey's place in the European Union.

President Martin Schulz is the third political leader to receive the title of Doctor Honoris Causa from İstanbul Bilgi University after Jack Lang and Nelson Mandela.

Before the conferment ceremony, the President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz participated in a long and spirited panel session with İstanbul Bilgi University students and answered numerous questions.

At the ceremony, Turkey's Minister for European Affairs and Chief Negotiator, Egemen Bağış, the Rector of İstanbul Bilgi University, Prof.Dr. Remzi Sanver; the Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Prof.Dr. Ege Yazgan; and the President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz gave speeches.

In his opening speech Prof. Dr. Remzi Sanver, Rector of İstanbul Bilgi University, thanked President Martin Schulz for his ***“sensitivity to democracy, human rights, active citizenship, civil society, and environment”***.

Following Prof.Dr.Remzi Sanver's speech, Egemen Bağış, Turkey's Minister for European Affairs and Chief Negotiator, took the floor and stressed his ***“long standing friendship with President Martin Schulz who has always given support to Turkey's democratization process.”***

Minister Bağış said ***“We are striving to conquer hearts and minds in order to achieve ,sooner or later,Turkey's EU membership to which we are committed”***.

After the speeches, President Martin Schulz received the Doctor Honoris Causa diploma and the honorary doctorate gown from the Rector of İstanbul Bilgi University, Prof.Dr.Remzi Sanver and Minister for European Affairs and the Chief Negotiator Egemen Bağış.

President Martin Schulz later pronounced a speech expressing his appreciation of İstanbul Bilgi University's decision, and stated that, ***“Bilgi's liberal stance which promotes tolerance and respect for a diversity of individuals with different lifestyles, beliefs and ways of thinking within the framework of contemporary universal values is an inspiration”***.

President Schulz reminded the participants that the first political action in which he participated as a young political activist was in support of the children of Turkish mine workers in the town where he later became Mayor.

Martin Schulz concluded by commenting that ***“Turkey and EU shared common universal values based on democracy and civil liberties ,and that he supported Turkey's EU Accession process”***.

### **Martin Schulz;**

Martin Schulz was born in 1955 and grew up in Hehlrath (Germany), close to the German-Dutch-Belgian borders. After high school he decided to try to make a living out of his passion for books and he did an apprenticeship as a bookseller. In 1982 he opened his own bookstore in Würselen, which he successfully ran for 12 years.

Joining the Social Democratic Party of Germany at the age of 19, he started out his political career. Aged 31, he was elected as the youngest mayor of North Rhine-Westphalia, a post he held for 11 years.

Since 1994, Martin Schulz is a Member of the European Parliament and has served in a number of committees, first serving on the sub-committee on Human Rights and then on the Committee on Civil Liberties and Home Affairs. He led the SPD MEPs from 2000 and was subsequently elected Vice-Chair of the Socialist Group.

In 2004 he was elected Group Leader of the second largest group in the European Parliament. As leader of the Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, Martin Schulz campaigned for social justice, promoting jobs and growth, reforming financial markets, fighting climate change, championing equality and creating a stronger and more democratic Europe.

Martin Schulz was elected President of the European Parliament on 17 January 2012 for a mandate of two and half years with 387 votes.

## **İstanbul Bilgi University**

Since its foundation in 1996, BiLGİ has attempted to establish a cultural and scientific community that promotes tolerance and respect for a diversity of individuals with different lifestyles, beliefs and ways of thinking within the framework of contemporary universal values, while at the same time maintaining strong ties with all segments of the society.

Being part of Laureate International Universities network, BiLGİ seeks to educate free-thinking, creative, intellectually curious and enterprising individuals who will contribute to a world in which knowledge is accessible to all and, indeed, in which access to it has come to be seen as a fundamental human right.

With a teaching staff of nearly 800, İstanbul Bilgi University has more than 11 000 students and nearly 15 000 graduates. İstanbul Bilgi University offers 85 associate degrees, bachelor degrees and doctoral programs under its colleges, vocational schools of higher education and institutes besides faculties of Arts and Sciences, Law, Economics and Administrative Sciences, Communication, Architecture and Engineering. İstanbul Bilgi University has three campuses in central İstanbul at Santral, Dolapdere and Kuştepe.

Since its foundation, İstanbul Bilgi University has a long-standing and firm commitment to establish, develop and support academic study programs, research and projects on the European Union.

From the very start İstanbul Bilgi University has also adopted an open and progressive position in political and social debates and has been involved in the discussions concerning the EU integration process. Bilgi has also hosted many EU political leaders such as José Manuel Barroso, Tony Blair and Costas Simitis in this framework.

For detailed information on İstanbul Bilgi University please visit [www.bilgi.edu.tr](http://www.bilgi.edu.tr) .

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