

## Zpravodajství ČTK 12. 12. 2008

### Czech deputies to submit bill punishing plagiarists - press

Masarykova univerzita, vysoké školy  
Prague, Dec 12 (CTK) –

A group of Czech deputies will submit a bill to the Chamber of Deputies in two or three months aimed against plagiarists even if they were uncovered a long time after they graduated from universities, the daily Pravo writes today. Under the bill, university graduates who successfully finished their studies on the basis of copied diploma theses would lose the academic degree even if plagiarism were discovered long after their graduation.

Persons who either copied other peoples' work or included large parts of it in their diploma theses would be punished regardless of considerable successes they might have achieved in their professional life since graduation, the paper says. The deputies based their bill on a special computer programme developed by Masaryk University researchers that enables to uncover plagiarism and that has been used by 17 Czech universities since of May.

The unique plagiarism-testing system allows to load students' and graduates' papers and compare whether certain sentences or segments of their texts are similar to those that were loaded in the system previously. The system even makes it possible to compare students' works with documents found on the Internet.

Successful managers, lawyers, economists and politicians who had cheated at universities would thus face disgrace instead of an excellent career and a big salary, Pravo says.

The bill would make it possible to rid them of their academic titles, which is impossible under the current legislation. "We are drafting our bill because it is not only necessary to punish the people who copied their diploma theses in the past, but because it should serve as a warning at present when plagiarism is a frequent new phenomenon at our universities," Ivan Ohlidal, deputy from the senior opposition Social Democrats (CSSD), one of the drafters, told Pravo.

Walter Bartos (senior ruling Civic Democrats, ODS), head of the Chamber of Deputies education committee, told Pravo he did not see it a problem to take away university diplomas from the people who obtained them on the basis of plagiarism.

"However, plagiarism would have to be described in detail and thoroughly proved so that no one were punished unjustly. This requires to set up clear rules," Bartos says.

In their effort to uncover plagiarism the universities that have joined the programme can use the database of Bachelor's and Master' theses as well as post-graduate works on the <http://theses.cz>.

"The number of all documents loaded in the Theses programme exceeds 1.1 million," Masaryk University spokeswoman Tereza Fojtova told Pravo.

Zdroj: <Zpravodajství ČTK>