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Public consultation on a “European Area of Skills and Qualifications”

Recognition of skills acquired in a third country

The process of recognising qualifications of doctors educated in another EU/EEA-member state is usually very efficient. Through the professional qualifications directive there are regulations for the minimum training requirements as well as for the recognition procedure. At the same time member states procedures for recognising qualifications gained outside of EU/EEA varies considerably and it usually takes years for a doctor to get the qualification recognised. This situation also applies for other regulated professions in the health sector. In Sweden the average duration for recognising a license to practice gained outside of EU/EEA is four years.

Doctors and all other professions educated outside EU/EEA are, after 3 years of professional experience in the first member state, able to use the professional qualifications directive (article 3 point 3) which means that recognising third country qualifications is partly a matter for the EU. The process of recognising third country qualifications also has patient safety implications.

The Swedish Medical Association has two suggestions:
- The Commission could make a review on how member states recognise qualifications of doctors educated outside the EU/EEA
- Initiating an EU wide network for competent authorities exchanging best practice on how to recognise third country qualifications might be a step toward a more efficient process.

Best regards
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