The Internal Market Information System (IMI)

Better communication – better service

ec.europa.eu/imi-net

What is IMI?

A Portuguese doctor applied for a job in our local hospital. I don't know
if she is qualified because her diploma is in Portuguese.

I have asked my Norwegian colleagues if an electrician who is providing his services here is established in Norway.
When can I expect a reply?

A German construction company will build a new shopping centre in our city. I'm not sure if the crane they brought has passed all the necessary technical checks in Germany.

An Estonian baker would like to open a bakery in our region. How can
I find out if he has the required professional experience?

IMI is designed to help European administrations get answers to questions like these. It is a multilingual electronic tool that makes it easier and faster for them to cooperate, reducing the costs caused by delays. Better service to citizens and businesses helps them make the most of the possibilities of the single market.

How can IMI help you?

If you work for a national, regional or local authority, you may …

- … need information from an authority in another country, but you are not sure whom to contact.
  - ▶ IMI puts you in touch with the right partner authority.

- … know whom to contact, but you and your counterpart do not speak the same language.
  - ▶ IMI provides you with standard sets of pre-translated questions and answers. For some languages, machine translation of free text is available.

- … wonder how long it will take until you receive a reply.
  - ▶ IMI tracks the progress of your request. By checking in IMI, you can follow all stages the request goes through. On average, 60% of all requests are answered within two weeks.

- … need to access information contained in a foreign register.
  - ▶ IMI offers a directory of registers held by authorities all over Europe, such as trade registers or registers of lawyers, with a multilingual search function. If a register is available online, IMI provides you with the direct link to it.

How does IMI work?

IMI is an IT-based information network that is accessible via the Internet. You do not need to install any additional software.

With the help of the IMI multilingual search function, you identify your partner authority in another country.

You create a request by selecting standard questions in your own language. You can also type in free text and attach documents.

You send the request to your partner authority.

Your partner authority receives the request in its own language.

By checking in IMI, you can track the progress of your request.

Your partner authority replies to you in its own language.

You receive the reply in your language.

Which areas does IMI cover?

IMI is designed as a flexible system that can be used for administrative cooperation to implement internal market legislation such as the following:

- For the directive on the recognition of professional qualifications[1], IMI now covers all of the most mobile professions, such as doctors, pharmacists, physiotherapists, accountants, teachers and architects.

- The services directive[2] obliges authorities to cooperate with their counterparts abroad in the supervision of service providers who are active across borders or who establish themselves in another country. IMI is being used to facilitate this cooperation.

For up-to-date information on areas in which IMI is being used or going to be used, please see the IMI website at ec.europa.eu/imi-net.

[1] Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications (OJ L 255, 30.9.2005, p.22).
[2] Directive 2006/123/EC on services in the internal market (OJ L 376, 27.12.2006, p.36).

How can my authority register for IMI?

You may need access to IMI, if you:

- √ work for a national, regional or local administration (for example a ministry, a municipality or a government agency) or for a professional organisation;
- √ are located in the European Economic Area[1]; and
- √ deal with those pieces of internal market legislation that IMI supports.

To find out more about registering, please contact your national IMI coordinator. You can find their contact details on the IMI website:

ec.europa.eu/imi-net

What about data protection?

IMI has been developed with data protection in mind. It offers a much higher level of protection and security than traditional communication means, such as email or telephone. In particular:

- procedural and technical features help ensure that personal data is processed only for the purposes for which it is intended;
- restrictions are imposed to ensure that only people who need to see personal data related to a case have access to it; and
- after an agreed period following the closure of a case, personal data is automatically deleted from the system.

More detailed information, including on the legal rules that apply, is available from the «Data Protection» section of the IMI website.

[1] The European Economic Area consists of all EU countries as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

What do IMI users say?

'Thanks to IMI I was able to solve a case which had been on hold for 8 months. Since we started using IMI we have already solved dozens of different cases easily, quickly and in a very friendly way. IMI has become an essential tool for our work.'

Amparo Huici
Secretariat General for Legislation and Technical Studies, Spain

'Sign up today! IMI is extremely simple to use and you won't regret your decision.'

Philip Sydenham
Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, United Kingdom

'It is wonderful. In the past, we sometimes had to wait for three months to receive an answer to our requests from some countries. With IMI, it is two days. Also, in some countries you had to go through five or even ten different administrations. Now you contact one person. That's all.'

Dr Jackie Ahr
National Professional Order of Doctors, France

To find out more, visit the IMI website:

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On the IMI website, you will also find the contact details of the national IMI coordinator in your country.

Publications Office