



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Chambre des députés for its Opinion on the Green Paper on modernising the Professional Qualifications Directive EC/2005/36 - COM(2011) 367 final. Your contribution has helped us to prepare the final proposal, published on 20 December 2011 {COM(2011)883 final}.

The first concern expressed in your Opinion relates to the possible administrative burden associated with the implementation of a European professional card. The Commission has concluded that introducing such a card would lead to simplification of recognition procedures, both for citizens and competent authorities, whilst allowing for safeguards for the host Member State. In this context the use of such a professional card should be closely linked to the Internal Market Information system (IMI) and underpinned by strong cooperation between competent authorities of the home and host Member States.

Another issue raised in your Opinion concerns the language skills of the professionals, in particular in the health sector. The Commission shares your concerns regarding the need to ensure flexibility when dealing with language requirements and supports the case-by-case approach in accordance with the principle of proportionality.

The Commission takes note of the position expressed by the Chambre des députés on the issue of partial access to a profession. In this regard, the Commission would like to stress that the possibility of partial access could in any event be used only when certain specific criteria are met (these are defined in the case law of the Court of Justice).

The Opinion of the Chambre des députés contains concerns about the respect of the subsidiarity principle, in particular regarding the training of health professions. The Commission would like to stress that the possible adjustments to the minimum training requirements for health professions respond to the need to modernise automatic recognition and increase confidence in this system.

The Chambre des députés also states that the rules for the recognition of qualifications should be compatible with the recent education reforms (Bologna process). An external study has been carried out to assess the impacts of these reforms on the recognition of qualifications. In particular, the study examined how the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) could be used to support automatic recognition for sectoral

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professions. Although it was recognised that ECTS has greater potential to support improved recognition of qualifications, it appeared that there were still significant differences across Member States in their approaches to credit allocation. In this context, the Commission considers it premature to use ECTS in the Directive (instead of duration of training) to define minimum training requirements.

The Commission hopes these explanations clarify the concerns expressed in your Opinion, and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue with the Chambre des députés .

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*