

Modernized professional qualifications can enhance mobility across Europe!

Simplification and modernization of Professional Qualifications Directive 2005/36/EC, setting the rules for mutual recognition of professional qualifications, can hand in hand with European Professional Card enhance mobility of professionals in Europe. The Single Market, although its formal achievement two decades ago, still poses some difficulties when it comes to the recognition of professional qualifications. This can be particularly perceived in the implementation of the Services Directive. In order to modernize the Directive and simplify its rules, following public consultation and Green Paper process, the European Commission will come up with a legislative proposal in December. Representatives from EU institutions, public bodies and business organisations discussed professional qualifications on 12th October at Czech Permanent Representation to the EU.

H.E. Jakub DŮRR, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the EU, pointed out that the Czech Republic considers modernisation and simplification of the professional qualifications system to be one of its priorities. Therefore, the proposal on professional qualifications should come out as soon as possible so the EU citizens can profit from its advantages.. Durr stressed that “the Single Market still witnesses some problems regarding regulated professions such as tourist guides. European Professional Card could be a solution for them and for other professions as well”. The Czech Republic regulates approximately 385 professions via decentralized system of 23 competent authorities and a central point at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. “We support the modernization of the system because of many regulated professions”, said **Zuzana RAŠKOVÁ**, Czech Coordinator for Recognition of Professional Qualifications. “We were involved in the preparation of a case study for tourist guides and engineers and think the European Professional Card could facilitate the mobility across Europe”, she added. The Czechs are also in favour of automatic recognitions but doubt about inclusion of Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) as the credit system is not the same in all Member States. **Jurgen TIEDJE**, Head of Movement of Professionals Unit of the European Commission was more careful regarding the changes of the Directive. “There won’t be any new proposal but only amendments updating the current Directive”, he stressed. The Commission starts discussions on Member States basis. “For instance Portugal succeeded to abolish 60 regulated professions last month”, Tiedje added. He informed that a legislative proposal is tentatively scheduled for December 2011 and invited participants to a high level conference on 7 November 2011 organized by the Commission. **Emma McCLARKIN**, MEP and Rapporteur on the Implementation of the Professional Qualifications Directive recalled Single Market priorities and stressed that we need to simplify the system by cutting red tape to enhance cooperation between national bodies and speed up recognitions by use of ICT, but maintain the quality of public health and safety. “An e-card introduction for some professions based on IMI could be an added value to share information and help professionals to be mobile across the EU”, she added.



Liliane VOLOZINSKIS, Director of Social Policy and Vocational Training of UEAPME stressed that the PQD is functioning well in practise. For this reason UEAPME does not ask for a complete change but for



a slight modernization. According to UEAPME, the European professional card based on IMI could enhance the mobility and advance cooperation between Member States who are the only ones to be responsible for reduction of regulated professions. “The question is how to ensure the transparency, regular updates and the costs of the proposed card”, she said. “In America people move from the North to the South and the West to the East without any problem. In Europe

only 5% of students go on Erasmus. There is a low mobility not only because of differences in languages”, said **Michèle CLAUS**, Director of the Labour Relations of FEB-VBO and Member of Social Affairs Committee of BUSINESSEUROPE. According to her, there is a need for simplification of the current PQD, a modernization of automatic recognition, significant reduction of number of regulated professions, clarification of co-existence of PQD and EQF and investigation on potential decrease of regulated professions. BUSINESSEUROPE particularly welcomes the ECTS to facilitate automatic recognition.

The event was organised by CEBRE and Czech Permanent Representation to the EU within a project administered by Confederation of Employers’ and Entrepreneurs’ Association of the Czech Republic supported by Ministry of Foreign Affairs promoting priorities of the Czech Foreign Policy. For more information contact Michal Kadera, Director of CEBRE at Michal.Kadera@cebre.cz.