

EPSU response to consultation on Green Paper on the Modernisation of the Professional Qualifications Directive

(Brussels 20 September 2011) EPSU today submitted a contribution to the public consultation on the Green Paper on the Modernisation of the Professional Qualifications Directive - COM(2011) 367 final - issued on 22 June 2011. It builds on EPSU's reply of 15 March 2011 to the public consultation on the Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (2005/36/EC) launched on 7 January 2011 the European Commission, see [EPSU position on cross-border recognition of professional qualifications](#).

Sections 3.2, 3.3., 3.5 and 4.2 of our reply to the first round of the consultation are still valid. The same holds for the three guiding principles paramount for EPSU and to be guaranteed when updating and revising the Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (2005/36/EC), namely.

- High level of qualification and professional standards to ensure minimum requirements for access to the profession for the health care workforce – concerning in particular professions benefitting from automatic recognition, but also those falling under the general system
- Health and safety of patients
- Quality of service provision in health and social care

Our reply is the outcome of an intensive internal consultation with affiliates and takes into account the written contributions and comments of about 15 EPSU members from more than 10 countries and the discussions in framework of the

European Sectoral Social Dialogue for the Hospital Sector.

EPSU's ten main messages (further developed under section 4 of our reply) to the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Council in view of their revision of the Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (2005/36/EC) - with the legislative process expected to start in late 2011 - are:

- 1) EPSU reiterates its request, already expressed in EPSU's reply of 15 March 2011 to the consultation on the revision of the Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications, Directive 2005/36/EC, to focus attention of all competent authorities and stakeholders and to put resources into further developing and "upgrading" the IMI system.
- 2) EPSU opposes partial access to any of the sectoral professions as it would go against the very logic and purpose of minimum requirements to be fulfilled, as currently defined in the Directive. EPSU would fear that introducing options for partial access would also create confusion for the patients.
- 3) EPSU fully supports the proposal to build on the existing National Contact Points to facilitate online the completion of all procedures related to the recognition of qualifications. They should indeed provide a centralised information service covering the competent authorities, information on how they can be contacted, all relevant national regulations and documentation requirements relating to recognition of qualifications and registration (where relevant).
- 4) EPSU supports the option of introducing the wider and more rigorous alert obligation for MS to immediately alert all other MS if a health professional is no longer allowed to practise due to a disciplinary sanction?
- 5) EPSU therefore supports the proposal to amend the directive itself in view of

language requirements and tests. There is broad support amongst EPSU members to allow for language tests/exams (on an individual/case-by-case basis) for both the competent authorities (general language knowledge) as part of the recognition process and for the employers recruiting health professionals (technical language skills for the concrete jobs and tasks) in the context of evaluating an applicant's employability, to safeguard objectives of patients' safety and public health. EPSU rejects the distinction proposed in the Green Paper to treat differently health professionals having direct contact with patients and others not having it.

6) EPSU is in favour of extending the principle currently applicable to temporary mobility that also professionals seeking establishment in a Member State other than that in which they acquire their qualifications should have to demonstrate to the receiving Member State that they have the right to exercise their profession/to practice in the home Member State.

7) EPSU supports its members that suggest that in order for health professionals to keep their skills updated and being safe to practice, to include a reference in the Directive to Member States having systems for continued professional development (CPD) in place to ensure the continuing competence of health professionals.

8) EPSU supports clarifying the minimum training requirements for doctors, nurses and midwives. It is important to keep the reference to the number of hours as verifying element in each curriculum for health care professionals. Also the number of hours and the % of theory and practice must remain to safeguard quality and safety in patient care.

9) EPSU is not calling for increasing the requirement of 10 years to 12 years of general school education as a mandatory solution/requirement for all Member States, as we consider that Member States that prefer keeping the requirement of 10 years of general school education, for whatever reason, should not be forced by Directive 2005/36/EC to change their system.

10) EPSU pleads for maintaining the rules currently in place as to the treatment of EU citizens having initially acquired qualifications in a third country. We are also supportive of adjusting the current rules for third country nationals who benefit from an equal treatment clause under relevant European legislation (e.g. family members) for the field of health and social services and all professionals there in case they fulfil the minimum requirements under the automatic recognition regime and the general scheme both content-wise and legally.

In addition to EPSU's own reply, the European social partners in the hospital sector, EPSU and HOSPEEM, have as in spring 2011 submitted a joint contribution to this second round of consultation. It gives witness of and reflects the particular attention they give to the topic of skills and qualification and their cross-border recognition in the context of the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for the Hospital Sector.

EPSU also contributed, together with ETUCE and Eurocadres, to a reply of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), jointly issued with Eurocadres, particularly focusing there on questions concerning the health care sector.

Read EPSU's contribution to the consultation

- [EPSU contribution](#)

Read the joint EPSU and HOSPEEM reply to the consultation

- [Joint EPSU-HOSPEEM reply](#)

Read the ETUC response to the consultation

- [ETUC-Eurocadres response](#)

- [Log in](#) to post comments

- [Printer-friendly version](#)

Policies

[Health](#)

[Social Services](#)

[Health and Safety](#)

Sectors

[Health and Social Services](#)

Document types

[Report](#)

[Statement](#)

[Papers and publications](#)