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Recognition of Professional Qualifications: update

Directive 2005/36/EC¹ on the recognition of professional qualifications (Text with EEA relevance) was adopted on 7 September 2005, and entered into force 20 days after its publication in the Official Journal on 30 September 2005.

On 20 October 2007, at the end of the transposition period, this Directive will replace fifteen existing Directives in the field of the recognition of professional qualifications, including the “doctors’ Directive” (Directive 93/16).

¹ Official Journal L 255 , 30/09/2005 P. 0022 - 0142

The text of the Directive can be downloaded from:

http://europa.eu.int/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexplus!prod!DocNumber&lg=en&type_doc=Directive&an_doc=2005&nu_doc=36

The new Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications

Regarding the Directive's specific provisions for the medical profession and the recognition of specialties, the acquis was kept (automatic recognition of 52 specialties, see the Annex of the Directive) and for the future, 2/5 of the Member States (this is 10) should propose and agree on the recognition of a new specialty. As for decisions concerning the minimum training duration, qualified majority will continue to be required (this means at least 13 Member States). Medical specialties are published in the OJEU following notification by Member States. This has not been changed by the new Directive.

The new Directive did not introduce changes regarding the GPs regime. In the meeting held on 15 September 2005 between UEMO President Dr Fabian, Vice-President Dr Chapman and Commission representatives (see UEMO 2005-46), Mrs Brumter-Coret said that no major changes in the Directive are expected within the 2 years Member States (MS) have to transpose it in their legal system.

During that period, existing procedures will continue to apply. If a modification is to be made, the European Commission will have to seek legal solutions so that the changes can be included in the new Directive.

Involvement of the European medical professional associations in the new system

Article 58 of the new Directive 2005/36 establishes a Committee on the recognition of professional qualifications. This Committee will be formed by Member States' representatives and chaired by the European Commission.

This Committee may consult experts from the professional groups concerned, according to Article 59.

Against this background, and in order to provide the necessary input of the medical profession to the Committee, CPME proposed to establish a working group (WG) together with the Associated Organisations.

This WG would monitor the management of the professional qualifications Directive and provide its expertise whenever asked for, or by its own initiative.

The WG, chaired by Dr Bitenc (Slovenia, CPME Vice-President) met for the first time on 11 March in Brussels. All Associated Organisations were represented. At this meeting, it was agreed that rules of procedure needed to be drafted, and that the WG would meet regularly in conjunction with the CPME Board meetings. It was also agreed that the medical profession needed to make all efforts to present a unified position of the medical profession to provide input in the framework of the consultation mechanism.

The WG will meet again on 17 June in Brussels.