

European Communities

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1983-1984

13 February 1984

DOCUMENT 1-1357/83

Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs
and Employment

on the proposal from the Commission of the European
Communities to the Council (Doc. 1-815/83 - COM(83)
482 final) for a Decision on the comparability of
vocational training qualifications between the Member
States of the European Community

Rapporteur: Mr Derek PRAG

By letter of 3 October 1983, the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a Decision on the comparability of vocational training qualifications between the Member States of the European Community.

On 10 October 1983, the President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport for an opinion.

At its meeting of 3 November 1983, the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment appointed Mr PRAG rapporteur.

The committee considered the Commission's proposal and the draft report at its meetings of 1 December 1983 and 31 January 1984.

At the last meeting, the committee decided unanimously to recommend to Parliament that it approve the Commission's draft Council Decision with the following amendments.

At the same meeting, the committee then considered the draft report as a whole and adopted the motion for a resolution unanimously.

The following took part in the vote: Mr PAPAEFSTRATIOU, Chairman; Mr FRISCHMANN, vice-Chairman; Mr PRAG, rapporteur; Mr ABENS (deputizing for Mr Dido), Mr BARBAGLI, Mr CERAVOLO, Mrs DUPORT, Mr EISMA, Mr GEURTSSEN (deputizing for Mr Calvez), Mr GHERGO, Mrs van den HEUVEL (deputizing for Mr Boyes), Mrs KELLETT-BOWMAN (deputizing for Mr Simpson), Mrs MAIJ-WEGGEN, Mr van MINNEN, Mr MOMMERSTEEG (deputizing for Mr McCartin), Mrs NIELSEN, Mr PATTERSON, Mrs SALISCH, Mrs SQUARCIALUPI (deputizing for Mr Damette), Mr TUCKMAN, Mr VANDEWIELE (deputizing for Mr Brök), Mrs VAN HEMELDONCK (deputizing for Mr Peters).

The opinion of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport will be presented orally.

The final version of the report was tabled on 1.2.1984.

The deadline for the tabling of amendments to this report appears in the draft agenda for the part-session at which it will be debated.

C O N T E N T S

	<u>Page</u>
Amendments	5
A. Motion for a resolution	10
B. Explanatory statement	13

The Committee on Social Affairs and Employment hereby submits to the European Parliament the following amendments to the Commission's proposal together with the motion for a resolution and explanatory statement:

Proposal for a Council Decision on
the comparability of vocational training qualifications
between the Member States of the European Community
(COM (83) 482 final)

Amendments tabled by the Committee
on Social Affairs and Employment

Text proposed by the Commission of the
European Communities

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Preamble unchanged

Recitals

Recitals

First recital
Amendment no. 6

First recital

Whereas the prime concern of the eighth of the general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy, established by the Council Decision of 2 April 1963⁽¹⁾, is to make it possible to achieve the mutual recognition of certificates and other documents confirming completion of vocational training and it is reasonable to expect that such mutual recognition should be fully effective in the foreseeable future;

Whereas the prime concern of the eighth of the general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy, established by the Council Decision of 2 April 1963⁽¹⁾, is to make it possible to achieve the mutual recognition of certificates and other documents confirming completion of vocational training;

2nd and 3rd recitals unchanged

Amendments tabled by the Committee
on Social Affairs and Employment

Fourth recital

Amendment no. 7

Whereas there is a very substantial degree of diversity in the vocational training systems in the Community, which themselves are constantly requiring adaptation to the new situations brought about by the impact of technological change on employment and job content and this requirement in itself makes speedy completion of this task - together with regular review and updating of the vocational training requirements recognised and accepted as comparable - essential;

5th to 9th recitals unchanged

Tenth recital (new)

Amendment no. 8

Whereas it is nevertheless essential that the work on comparability of vocational training qualifications be greatly accelerated if it is ever to be of value and if the necessary continuous monitoring and updating is to be effected;

The last two recitals remain unchanged

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION

Article 1

Amendment no. 9

The comparability of vocational training qualifications in the European Community requires greatly accelerated common action by the Member States, to enable workers to use their qualifications in particular for the purposes of obtaining employment in another Member State;

Second paragraph of Article 1 and 2 remain unchanged

Article 3

Amendment no. 10

The Commission shall immediately take the necessary steps to establish within five years the comparability of vocational training qualifications between the various Member States, in respect of specific occupations or

Text proposed by the Commission of the
European Communities

Fourth recital

Whereas there is a very substantial degree of diversity in the vocational training systems in the Community, which themselves are constantly requiring adaptation to the new situations brought about by the impact of technological change on employment and job content;

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION

Article 1

The comparability of vocational training qualifications in the European Community requires progressive common action by the Member States, to enable workers to use their qualifications in particular for the purposes of obtaining employment in another Member State;

Article 3

The Commission shall undertake work to establish the comparability of vocational training qualifications between the various Member States, in respect of specific occupations or

Amendments tabled by the Committee
on Social Affairs and Employment

groups of occupations. This work shall, in the first instance, concentrate upon level two (skilled worker) of the structure of levels of training mentioned in Article 2, for which level it shall be completed in two years from the adoption of this Decision;

Amendment no. 11

The scope of this Decision shall subsequently be extended to permit work to be undertaken at the levels of the structure of levels of training, upon a proposal from the Commission, and the work shall be completed in five years from the adoption of this Decision;

Third paragraph of Article 3 remains unchanged

Article 4

Unchanged

Unchanged

Unchanged

Unchanged

Unchanged

Text proposed by the Commission of the
European Communities

groups of occupations. This work shall, in the first instance, concentrate upon level two (skilled worker) of the structure of levels of training mentioned in Article 2;

The scope of this Decision may subsequently be extended to permit work to be undertaken at other levels of the structure of levels of training, upon a proposal from the Commission;

Article 4

The following working procedure, based on six successive and complementary stages, shall be employed by the Commission in establishing the comparability of vocational training qualifications:

- selection of the relevant occupations or groups of occupations in the sector under consideration;

- drawing up agreed Community job descriptions for those occupations;

- matching the vocational training qualifications recognised in the various Member States with those job descriptions;

- establishing comparative tables incorporating information on the SEDOC and national occupational classification codes, the level of vocational training according to the Community structure of levels of training, and for each Member State the occupational title and corresponding vocational training qualifications, the organisations and institutions responsible for dispensing vocational training, and the authorities and organisations competent to issue or validate diplomas, certificates, or other documents confirming completion of vocational training;

Amendments tabled by the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment

Unchanged

Amendment no. 25

- dissemination of information on the established comparabilities to all appropriate bodies at national, regional and local levels, as well as throughout the occupational sectors concerned, and in particular through the creation of a data base at Community level (readily accessible to employers and others involved in providing employment).

Article 5

Unchanged

Amendment no. 12

The national coordination offices shall also be responsible for establishing appropriate reception and information arrangements with regard to vocational training for their own nationals wishing to work in other Member States, and for incoming workers from other Member States, and for the issue on request of certificates (to be known as European Community Vocational Training Passes) attesting the comparability of vocational training qualifications, and listing certificates and diplomas held together with details of courses and apprenticeships undertaken.

Text proposed by the Commission of the European Communities

- publication of the agreed Community job descriptions and the comparative tables in the Official Journal of the European Communities;

- dissemination of information on the established comparabilities to all appropriate bodies at national, regional and local levels, as well as throughout the occupational sectors concerned;

Article 5

Each Member State shall designate a national coordination office, based wherever possible on existing structures, which shall be responsible for ensuring - in close collaboration with the social partners and the occupational sectors concerned - the proper dissemination of information to all interested parties, provide the necessary intersectoral coordination, and act as the focal point in their country for contacts with the coordination offices in other Member States, and with the Commission.

The national coordination offices shall also be responsible for establishing appropriate reception and information arrangements with regard to vocational training for their own nationals wishing to work in other Member States, and for incoming workers from other Member States, and for the issue on request of certificates (based on the model in Annex 2) attesting the comparability of vocational training qualifications.

The third paragraphs of Article 5 and 6 remain unchanged

Amendments tabled by the Committee on
Social Affairs and Employment

Text proposed by the Commission of the
European communities

Article 6(a) (new)

Amendment no. 13

The Commission is empowered to make
the necessary operational arrangements
for, and shall work out for the initial
two-year period the budgetary
implications of, the timetables set
in Article 3;

Article 7

Amendment no. 14

Each Member State shall, every
two years, submit to the Commission
a national report on the practical
implementation of these arrangements
and the results.

Article 7

Each Member State shall, every
three years, submit to the Commission
a national report on the practical
implementation of these arrangements
and the results.

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Annex 1 remains unchanged

Amendment no. 1

Annex 2

MODEL CERTIFICATE

for attesting the comparability
of vocational training qualifications

This is to certify that:

Mr/Ms -----

Date of birth -----

Resident at -----

Annex 2

MODEL CERTIFICATE

for attesting the comparability
of vocational training qualifications

This is to certify that:

Mr/Mrs/Miss -----

Date of birth -----

Resident at -----

Rest of Annex 2 remains unchanged

Annex 3 remains unchanged

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A.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

closing the procedure for consultation of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a Decision on the comparability of vocational training qualifications between the Member States of the European Community

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (COM(83) 482 final),
- having been consulted by the Council (Doc. 1-815/83),
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment, and the opinion of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport (Doc. 1-1357/83),
- having regard to the result of the vote on the proposal from the Commission,

1. Notes the Commission's belated revival of this long-standing project through proposals to establish, as a first step, the comparability of vocational training qualifications at the second (skilled worker) level of the five levels chosen for the Community's vocational training structure;
2. Recognises the extent and complexity of the tasks involved in laying the foundations for and achieving the establishment of comparability of vocational training qualifications throughout the European Community;
3. Nevertheless, in view of the rapid rate of technological change in most trades, the need for constant monitoring, regular review and frequent updating of job descriptions, methods and qualifications, and the need to assist young people, regards the Commission's proposals as inadequate to achieve its objectives within a reasonable time;
4. Regards as essential the speeding up of the process envisaged by the Commission;

5. Is convinced that this can only be done by adopting a definite timetable, thereby making it necessary for the Commission to revise its methods of working and speed up the whole operation;
6. Believes, however, that in the short run a mutual recognition of qualifications is more important than the harmonization of training, and also provides a better basis for the integration of Member States' economies;
7. Recognises that, although the free movement of workers from one Member State to another has largely come to a standstill, maintenance of the principle is still fundamental to the common market, and that while the principal reason for this situation is the recession, some of the blame must be attributed to the ineffectual utilisation of the SEDOC system and the failure to establish the comparability of vocational training qualifications;
8. Considers that a European Community vocational training pass would contribute to greater transparency and mobility in vocational training and therefore calls on the Commission and the Governments of the Member States to introduce such a document in which all vocational qualifications, further education and practical training periods will be recorded and be recognized in other Member States;
9. Stresses that the objective of establishing comparability of vocational training qualifications is not only worthwhile in itself, but also an essential prerequisite for progress in achieving a common vocational training policy, and that it will become increasingly relevant with the return of economic recovery and the consequent resumption of the movement of workers between Member States;
10. Calls, therefore, on the Commission and Council to speed up the whole process of establishing comparability of vocational training qualifications throughout the Community by adopting the time limits proposed by the European Parliament;
11. Calls on the Commission, in view of the above, and pending the establishment of a common vocational training policy, to lay down minimum requirements which must be fulfilled for specific qualifications, as a prerequisite for the

mutual recognition of certificates issued in the Member States by the appropriate authorities or institutions.

A declaration issued by a public or private company concerning the performance over a certain period of functions associated with a specific vocational qualification may also be regarded as equivalent to the relevant certificate;

- '12. Instructs its President to forward to the Commission and Council the proposals from the Commission as voted by Parliament and the corresponding resolution as Parliament's opinion.

B. EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. Comparability of vocational training qualifications is essential to the free movement of labour. Many young people and others are prevented from working in Member States other than their own because their vocational training qualifications are not recognised there.
2. It is clear that, in tackling the work on comparability, the Commission eventually came to recognise the immensity of the task required of it in order to implement the eighth principle of the common vocational training policy decided on by the Council in April 1963. The task of working out comparability of diplomas and certificates for a large number of trades, at five levels for each trade, in ten different countries, is indeed enormously voluminous and detailed.
3. The present Decision would be applied initially to only one of five skill 'levels', namely 'skilled workers' (the other levels are semi-skilled, technical, higher technical and full university), and at that level so far only three out of perhaps 400 - 500 possible trades have been covered by 'detailed work of a pilot nature'. If this is all that has been done since 1962 - i.e. in 22 years - one may well ask how long the Commission expects to take to complete 20 priority occupations, even at only one of the five levels?
4. Progress to date has been unbelievably slow and, in relation to the immensity of the task still ahead, alarmingly little has been achieved. It is not enough for the Commission to justify this situation by pointing to the tremendous scope and complexity of the work involved. If the Commission were to have carried on at the same snail's pace, it would - on its own admission - have needed until somewhere near the year 3000 to complete the whole exercise! Even on the basis of the Commission's proposal, the initial work, excluding review and revision, could well continue into the 21st century. This would make somewhat absurd the Commission's claim that the results of its efforts will be of particular value to young people seeking their first job. Today's young people would no longer be young by the time the Commission had completed its work for all occupational groups and at all five levels.

5. Moreover, technologies are now changing so rapidly that it is difficult to believe that any of the job descriptions and comparability tables for diplomas and certificates currently being drawn up would still be valid by the time the whole exercise had been completed. Regular frequent review and updating will therefore be absolutely essential.

6. In the meantime, young people and others wishing to work in Member States other than their own are turned away by those Member States: their qualifications, however good, are not recognised beyond their national frontiers. Petitions from Community citizens, many of them young people, who have been victims of this situation, are regularly received by the Parliament and referred to its Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions.

7. What can be done? First, we must recognise that:

(a) the Commission department responsible for this work is woefully understaffed, and

(b) the present arrangements as regards co-operation and co-ordination with CEDEFOP, the Advisory Committee for Vocational Training, groups of national experts, etc. are clearly not adequate.

The methods and resources employed so far must be fundamentally reviewed and overhauled if the Commission is to complete its work in this important field rapidly and effectively and, at the same time, to carry out the continuous monitoring, periodical review and updating which are essential if the whole exercise is to be of use to the citizens of the Community.

8. In the light of the above, and making due allowance for the immensity of the task which the Commission has taken upon itself in (a) establishing comparability of certificates, diplomas and other qualifications for ten Member States, and for a very large number of trades, at five different levels in each instance, and (b) continuously monitoring and updating its findings, the rapporteur has come to the following conclusion: the drawing up of Community job descriptions and comparability tables of qualifications

should be completed within two years for all trades at training level 2, and within five years for all trades at the remaining four levels.

9. If these deadlines were substantially extended, or - worse still - not specified at all, the whole notion of periodical review and updating set out in the introduction to document COM (83) 482 final and in Article 6 of the proposal for a Council Decision would make no sense - for the simple reason that, if the present rate of work were not greatly accelerated, it is quite likely that, by the end of the century, there would still, for many trades and at some levels, be nothing to review or update.

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