

Creation of a European qualifications framework

2006/2002(INI) - 26/09/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Thomas MANN (EPP-ED, DE) on the creation of a European Qualifications Framework. It pointed out in the resolution that one of the main tasks of the EQF must be to facilitate the transfer of qualifications between different education and training systems. This is in order to make transnational professional mobility possible and better to meet the requirements of supply and demand in the European labour market. On this basis, the Commission proposal is a correct approach, even if it does not entirely meet the requirement of a transparent qualifications framework.

Parliament called for the eight proposed reference levels of the EQF to be revised and improved. It felt that their descriptors should be expressed more concisely and comprehensibly and that it is important to distinguish clearly between the various reference levels, so that there could be a clear hierarchy of qualifications. Parliament went on to state that the competences set out in the eight-level descriptors should include knowledge not only of social and ethical, but also of cultural issues. It recalled that that the EQF must serve primarily to classify certification procedures based on the outcome of vocational training and to that end, Parliament called for simple, workable descriptors to be used and the number of levels reduced. Comparative experiments have shown that the more fragmented the levels and the more numerous the criteria, the more difficult it is to coordinate them.

There must be stronger support for common European principles on validating non-formal and informal learning processes on lifelong learning particularly regarding the acquisition of technological and scientific knowledge and skills. Parliament took the view that it is essential to pay particular attention to methods and systems of evaluating learning outcomes achieved by non-formal or informal methods.

Parliament called for every country to have its own national or regional qualifications frameworks, organised in cooperation with the responsible organisations and bodies as appropriate, ensuring compatibility with the EQF. It asked the Commission and Member States to enhance the role and structure of the National Europass Centre (NEC) and to make it easier for the NEC to fulfil its core tasks, with particular reference to the wider dissemination of the instruments directly managed by the NEC (European Curriculum Vitae, Mobility Europass) and the progressive adoption of the Europass system. The EQF can make a significant contribution to the mobility of the European labour market if the decision of a Member State to match individual national qualifications to a particular EQF level is accepted by others.

Parliament called on the Commission to revise its proposal on the basis of Parliament's observations, and to brief Parliament on the outcome of the national consultations before drawing up its final proposal.