

Doctors, nurses and other professionals to move more easily within EU

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Millions of EU citizens consider working abroad. But many of them are worried about the recognition of their professional qualifications. Inside the European Union, many obstacles will soon be removed for them: The European Parliament has adopted today the revised legislation on 'Mutual recognition of professional qualifications' after a successful trilogue negotiation on the issue, there will be a first reading agreement with the Council and a quick implementation.

EU citizens will benefit from the fundamental freedoms of the internal market and respond to the needs of Member States facing increasing shortages of skilled workers, in particular in sectors such as health, education, construction and business services.

Eduard HELLVIG (PNL, Romania), who is the rapporteur for the ALDE group on the issue, said: "In times of economic crisis with record levels of unemployment, especially among the youth, I strongly believe that we have the political responsibility to overturn this trend. Part of the answer is increasing the mobility of professionals across the EU. By adopting this directive, which is a key initiative of the Single Market Act, I think we take a first step towards a better and more efficient EU labour market."

"The new legislative framework brings new opportunities for professionals, such as the European Professional Card, which was strongly defended by the ALDE Group and which will enable professionals to have their qualifications recognised through simplified and quicker procedures, thus making it easier for citizens to find jobs in other EU Member States."

Other new elements are:

- The introduction of language controls that competent authorities can carry out in the case of professions with implications for patient safety,
- Some changes in the training requirements for the professions benefiting from automatic recognition (doctors, nurses, midwives, dentists, pharmacists, veterinary surgeons and architects).
- Basic medical and basic dental training requires now a minimum of 5 years of practical and theoretical studies. In the case of nurses and midwives admission to training can be achieved either by 12 years or 10 years of school education. They now need to receive further knowledge, skills and qualifications during their training;
- notaries will be exempt from the Directive.