European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for lifelong learning

2006/0163(COD) - 24/10/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Mario **MANTOVANI** (EPP-ED, IT) and made several amendments to the Commission's proposal. The principal ones are as follows:

- **Recommendation 1:** Member States should use the European Qualifications Framework as a reference tool to compare the qualification levels of the different qualifications systems and to promote both lifelong learning and equal opportunities in the knowledge-based society, as well as the further integration of the European labour market, while respecting the rich diversity of national education systems;

- **Recommendation 2:** Member States should relate their national qualifications system to the European Qualifications Framework by 2010, (rather than 2011 as proposed by the Commission) in particular by referencing in a transparent manner their qualification levels to the levels set out in Annex II, and, where considered appropriate, by developing national qualifications frameworks in accordance with national legislation and practice;

- **Recommendation 3:** Member States should adopt measures, as appropriate, so that, by 2012, (rather than 2011 as the Commission had proposed) all new qualification certificates, diplomas and "Europass" documents issued by the competent authorities contain a clear reference, by way of national qualifications systems, to the appropriate European Qualifications Framework level;

- **Recommendations 4:** Member States should use an approach based on learning outcomes when defining and describing qualifications, and promote the validation of non-formal and informal learning in accordance with the common European principles agreed in the Council conclusions of 28 May 2004, paying particular attention to those citizens most likely to be subject to unemployment or insecure forms of employment, for whom such an approach could help increase participation in lifelong learning and access to the labour market;

- **Recommendation 5:** Member States should promote and apply the principles of quality assurance in education and training set out in Annex III when relating higher education and vocational education and training qualifications within national qualifications systems to the European Qualifications Framework;

- **Recommendation 6:** Member States should designate national coordination points, linked to the particular structures and requirements of the Member States, to support and, in conjunction with other relevant national authorities, to guide the relationship between the national qualifications system and the European Qualifications Framework, in order to promote the quality and transparency of that relationship.

Parliament substituted "national coordination points" are to be substituted for "national centres".

The list of the Commission's Intentions was also amended:

- Parliament stressed the exchange of good practice and testing - inter alia through voluntary peer review and pilot projects under Community programmes, launching information and consultation exercises with social dialogue committees - and developing support and guidance material;

- the Commission should establish, within one year of the adoption of the Recommendation, a European Qualifications Framework advisory group (composed of representatives of Member States and involving

the European social partners) responsible for providing overall coherence and promoting transparency of the process of relating qualifications systems to the European Qualifications Framework;

- it should assess and evaluate, in cooperation with the Member States and after consulting the stakeholders concerned, the action taken in response to this Recommendation, including the remit and duration of the advisory group, and report, five years after its adoption, to the European Parliament and the Council on the experience gained and implications for the future, including, if necessary, the possible review and revision of the Recommendation;

- a new Intention 4 states that the Commission should promote close links between the European Qualifications Framework and existing or future European systems for credit transfer and accumulation in higher education and vocational education and training, in order to improve citizens' mobility and facilitate the recognition of learning outcomes

Lastly, some amendments are made to the Annexes. A list of definitions was inserted as Annex I.