Vocational training: comparability of vocational training qualifications between Member States (repeal. Decision 85/368/EEC)

2007/0234(COD) - 22/10/2008 - Final act

PURPOSE: to repeal Council Decision 85/368/EEC on the comparability of vocational training qualifications between Member States.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision No 1065/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council repealing Council Decision 85/368/EEC on the comparability of vocational training qualifications between the Member States of the European Community.

BACKGROUND: Council Decision 85/368/EEC introduced a system for the comparability of vocational education and training (VET) qualifications. It aimed to give workers an opportunity to make better use of their qualifications to obtain access to employment in other Member States. The system defined in the Decision sought to achieve this by defining practical job descriptions in specified occupations, readable across the Community, and so provide firms, workers, and public authorities with the necessary information on the comparability of qualifications obtained in various Member States. The Decision called for the Commission and Member States to cooperate in drawing up Community job descriptions for specific occupations or groups of occupations, and then match vocational training qualifications recognised in the Member States with these agreed job descriptions. The Decision also required countries to designate a coordination body to gather and disseminate information on comparable vocational qualifications.

In practice, however, the system proposed by the Decision proved cumbersome and implementation at best partial. The Commission and Member States concentrated initially on the occupational qualifications of skilled workers. As a first step, 219 VET qualifications in 19 sectors were designated (the 19 sectors were chosen to reflect occupations whose workers were most likely to move to other countries). However, the process of recording, describing and comparing qualifications had proven slow and unwieldy. Moreover, the Decision proved too inflexible to adapt to changing needs and the Commission and Member States came to accept that the centralised approach set out in Decision 85/368/ECC, and the constant and rapid evolution of qualifications, soon made the published information out of date and the system, as a whole, almost impossible to apply.

For all these reasons, implementation of the activities specified in the Decision was soon abandoned. Its application is therefore rendered useless given the recently adopted initiatives taken at EU or inter-governmental level to increase transparency, support transfer and facilitate the valuing of learning outcomes (in particular, the European Qualifications Network [see COD/2006/0163], which seeks to replicate the broad objective of the 1985 Decision, in aiming to facilitate the comparison of qualifications and thereby the mobility of workers).

CONTENT: the only objective of the Decision is therefore to repeal Council Decision 85/368/EEC on the comparability of vocational training qualifications between Member States, under the Commission's programme to simplify legislation.

The repeal of this text is consistent with the Lisbon agenda, in particular the Better Regulation strategy and the need to simplify the regulatory environment for business and other stakeholders.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 19 November 2008.