Better services for skills and qualifications (Europass)

2016/0304(COD) - 15/03/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 587 to 37 with 20 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass) and repealing Decision No 2241/2004 /EC.

Parliament's position adopted in first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure amended the Commission proposal as follows:

Purpose and scope: the proposed decision would establish a European framework (Europass) to **support the transparency and understanding of skills and qualifications** acquired in formal, non-formal and informal settings, including through practical experiences, mobility and volunteering).

Europass shall consist of **web-based tools and relevant available information, provided through an online platform** and supported by national services intended to help users to better communicate and present skills and qualifications and to compare qualifications.

Europass shall be targeted at:

- individual end-users, such as learners, job seekers, workers and volunteers, and
- relevant stakeholders, such as education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers.

The use of Europass shall be **voluntary.**

Main principles and features: the Europass online platform and web-based tools, including their content and functionality, shall be: (i) **user-friendly and secure** and be made available free-of-charge to all users; (ii) accessible to persons with **disabilities**.

Europass web-based tools shall: (i) use **open standards** to be made available free of charge for reuse by Member States and other stakeholders on a voluntary basis; (ii) ensure **technical interoperability** and synergies with other relevant instruments and services offered at Union and, where appropriate, national levels; (iii) be delivered in the **official languages** of the institutions of the Union.

The Europass online platform may include an option for users to **store personal data** such as a personal profile. Union data protection law shall apply to the processing of such personal data. National implementing measures should apply to the processing of personal data stored and processed in accordance with the Decision.

Europass supplements: these shall ensure ease of understanding and the provision of complete information. They shall be issued **free of charge and, where possible, in electronic form,** in the national language and, where possible, in another European language. Europass supplements shall not replace original diplomas or certificates and shall not amount to formal recognition of the original diploma or certificate by competent authorities or bodies of other countries.

The Commission's tasks: the Commission shall manage the Europass online platform. In that regard it shall: (i) ensure the availability and high quality of Union-level information; (ii) test and, when necessary, update the Europass online platform, including open standards, in line with user needs and technological advancements as well as changes in labour markets and in the provision of education and training; (iii) keep up to date with and incorporate the latest technological developments that can improve the accessibility of Europass for older persons and persons with disabilities; (iv) ensure that any web-based tools, in particular tools for assessment and self-assessment, are fully tested and quality-assured.

Furthermore, the Commission shall ensure the active participation and involvement of Member States in strategic planning, development, testing, updating and evaluation of the Europass online platform.

Role of Member States: the latter shall: (i) promote the use and strengthen the awareness and **visibility** of Europass; (ii) make information on learning opportunities, qualifications and recognition practices available on the Europass online platform; (iii) involve stakeholders from all relevant sectors in the activities under their responsibility.

Updates and changes to the Europass framework should be made in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, such as employment services, guidance practitioners, education and training providers, the social partners such as trade unions and employers' associations, and in full respect of ongoing political co-operation, such as the Bologna Process in the European Higher Education Area.