Single Community framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences (Europass)

2003/0307(COD) - 17/12/2003 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to establish a single framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences known as "Europass". PROPOSED ACT : Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council. CONTENT : Good communication about qualifications and competences is crucial when a person applies for a job or for admission to a learning opportunity. A number of tools have been developed in the recent years at various levels to improve the transparency of qualifications and competences, so that citizens can better communicate them. They are particularly helpful when applicant and employer do not come from the same country. This proposal rationalises the existing tools and networks aimed at transparency in the field of education and training, in order to improve their effectiveness. It aims to link separate documents aimed at the transparency of qualifications and competences into a single framework, in the form of a structured portfolio of documents, known as "Europass". The core of the Europass portfolio is the European CV, to which the other "Europass documents" will be linked. The proposal directly brings together into the Europass portfolio some existing documents, but makes clear that this is not the exhaustive list of Europass documents: in future, further documents could be considered parts of the Europass, provided that they share the purpose to improve the transparency of qualifications and competences and that they satisfy the operational conditions required to be integrated. It will be a responsibility for the Commission and the relevant national authorities to verify that these conditions are met. For citizens, using any single Europass document or the whole Europass portfolio is a voluntary act: they are an opportunity offered to citizens and not an obligation. This proposal defines the first five documents included in the Europass portfolio. These are: - The European CV: this is a personal document completed by the person concerned. - The MobiliPass: after five years of operation, the Europass-Training will be replaced by the MobiliPass, meant to record European learning pathways, that is, periods of learning in another country that satisfy certain quality criteria. These criteria do not include the requirement - characteristic of the existing Europass-Training - that the learning should be "work-linked training". - The Diploma Supplement: this document was developed with the Council of Europe and UNESCO, to make higher education degrees more transparent. It is a personal document, containing, among others, information related to the specific educational pathway of each individual holder. It is completed by the institution which delivers it to its holder along with the degree which it supplements. Bringing it into the Europass framework does not need any real change, besides adding the Europass logo. - The Certificate Supplement, concerning vocational education and training. This proposal does not make any change to common format recently agreed informally by Member States and now used by national authorities to prepare the actual supplements for each certificate. This document has a different nature from the others, as it does not refer to its specific holder: a certificate supplements clarifies the vocational qualificationto which it refers, and is the same for all those who hold that qualification. - The European Language Portfolio, which adapts the model agreed within the Council of Europe and based on the Common Framework for Languages. It is a document in which citizens can record the linguistic and cultural skills they have acquired. It contains in particular a Language Passport, where holders can give details on their proficiency in languages. Countries can adapt the common model, for instance to better gear it to the needs of specific target groups. The documents must carry the Europass logo and be available in electronic form. Implementation measures: In each country a single body, known as the Europass National Agency (ENA), should be appointed to coordinate all the related activities. Each Member State will decide whether its ENA should be established by expanding one of relevant existing bodies, by merging several such bodies or by replacing them. All activities related to the implementation at national level of this proposal will receive Community financial support exclusively through one yearly grant awarded to the ENA. The activities for which the ENA will be responsible include: -managing the

transparency documents; -setting up and managing the information system; -promoting the portfolio and its documents; -providing information and guidance -networking at European level. The information system: all Europass documents, either completed by citizens like the European CV or released by authorities, should be available in the relevant part of the information system. However, citizens should be entitled to retrieve from the information system only their personal Europass documents Financial implications: Given that Europass is intended to be a permanent instrument for citizens, this decision will have an unlimited duration. Therefore no reference amount is indicated and the annual appropriations will be authorised by the budget authority within the limits of the financial perspective. The financial statement indicates the costs envisaged for the first two years of operation (2005 and 2006 - please see below). In 2007 a new generation of programmes in the field of education and training should enter into force under the new financial perspectives. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS : - Budget lines and headings: 15030101 and 15010405 - Europass. - Total allocation for action (Part B): EUR 2 million for commitment per year. - Overall financial impact of human resources and other administrative expenditure: 2005 and 2006 - EUR 0.459 million each year. Total: EUR 0.918 million. Overall total commitments and payments: EUR 4.918 million. Total staff: 4 (2 A Grade, 1 B grade and 1 C grade).