Recognition of qualifications for academic and professional purposes

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OBJECTIVE: this communication is the initial basis for action by the Commission to reconcile the various ways in which qualifications are recognised in the Community with a view to facilitating the free movement of persons and services and freedom of establishment. The Commission proposes 4 ways of reconciling how professional and academic qualifications are recognised: information, the creation of academic and professional networks, consensus-based adaptation of training courses and assessment of the quality of training. The idea is to instigate a debate within the Community institutions and the Member States (especially in higher education institutes and with the relevant national authorities) in order to obtain the views of all the parties involved on this subject by 1 July 1995 so that plans can be made to strengthen Community initiatives in this area and, where applicable, launch new types of measures which come within the powers of the Community. CONTENT: the Community acquis in relation to the recognition of professional and academic qualifications has a basic common objective: to eliminate obstacles to the mobility of professionals and students by reason of the different national education systems. Greater interaction between the various ways in which qualifications are recognised is needed in order to coordinate and improve the coherence of action in connection with the recognition of academic and professional qualifications. The Commission proposes 4 lines of approach which will enable the Member States and the Community institutions to identify ways of reconciling the various recognition systems: - information: high-quality information systems will help increase familiarity with the various education systems in the Community. The Commission proposes in particular that: . national reports should be drafted on curricula, how professions are organised and how to gain access to them; . a directory should be compiled of professions which are regulated in the Member States; . a network of multivalent national centres should be created; . information seminars should be organised; - academic and professional networks should be created in order to increase familiarity with the various recognition systems and universities and professionals should start discussing how training and professions can be developed; - consensus-based adaptation of training courses, especially for professions with regulated qualifications governed by general systems of recognition. The idea is to reduce current discrepancies between syllabuses and achieve a more automatic recognition process; - the quality of training needs to be assessed so that every institute can evaluate its strong and weak points. This system would strengthen mutual confidence between Member States and facilitate recognition (mainly by linking assessment systems).