



ECEC NEWS

Europe 2020: Country-specific recommendations

On 29 May 2013 the European Commission presented the 2013 country-specific recommendations in view to the Europe 2020 Growth Strategy. The recommendations are based on the Commission's assessment of progress made on last year's recommendations, as well as the new national reform programmes and stability or convergence programmes submitted by Member States. The implementation of the recommendations will be monitored closely and on an on-going basis by the Commission services. The Commission will keep the Council informed of its findings throughout the coming year. A formal assessment of each Member State's performance will take place in May/June 2014, when the Commission presents next year's country-specific recommendations and accompanying analysis.

For regulated professions these recommendations are very important as in many countries regulated professions are a target area in which the Commission wants the member states to enhance competition; e.g. by checking professional regulations and abolishing as many regulated professions as possible. Therefore these recommendations should closely be checked by ECEC member organisations on national level as actions coming from the national governments or the national competition authorities have to be expected.

The recommendations for all countries can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm

European Parliament – Draft IMCO Report on the Internal Market for Services: State of Play and Next Steps

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/imco/pr/914/914440/914440en.pdf

The European Parliament's Internal Market Committee has drafted a report on the internal market for services. This report makes a very strong appeal to Member states to remove existing regulatory burdens for service providers. Among other things the report says explicitly that *the Member states are often using overriding reasons of public interest to protect and favour their domestic market and that legal-form and shareholder requirements, territorial restrictions and fixed tariffs create unjustified obstacle to cross-border establishment*. The Parliament also appeals to the Commission to apply a zero tolerance policy in order to ensure full compliance with the Services Directive.

Especially the development that the European Institutions see the argument of public interest more and more as a mean of protectionism is problematic in view to the argumentation that we use for the necessary high quality of Engineering services.

Not all members of the European Parliament were in favour of this strict wording and of this overall demand for deregulation and have made amendments to the report, which try to alleviate the very strict wording and to stress the importance of the protection of public interest. The adoption in the IMCO Committee is foreseen for 8/9 July, the adoption in the plenary for September 2013.

In June the ECEC has sent out a model letter to its member organisations which can be used to seek the support of their national members of the IMCO Committee for those amendments stressing the importance of the protection of public interest.

Professional Qualifications Directive

On 12 June Commissioner Barnier released a statement on the political agreement on the New Professional Qualification Directive.

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-13-552_en.htm?locale=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-552_en.htm?locale=en)

The provisionally-agreed text still needs to be formally approved by the Council Committee of Permanent Representatives (scheduled for 27 June 2013) and Parliament's Internal Market Committee. The IMCO will



probably vote on the deal before the summer break, paving the way for a plenary vote in October. We will inform you about details when the final text is available.

Workshop Regulating access to professions: National perspectives on 17 June 2013

The European Commission has organized this discussion with the aim to invite stakeholders to have an exchange on the different approaches to the regulation of professions across the EU and the on-going reforms in this area. There was also a special session on the regulation of the profession of Engineers. ECEC participants were Klaus Thürriedl and Thomas Noebel.

Klaus Thürriedl has reported that it became very clear that within the Commission the development in the direction of “deregulating” regulated professions is still in full swing. The Commission’s main – ostensible – argument is that deregulation stimulates economy, leads to more competition and therefore lower prices. Nevertheless there were certain concessions that at least a certain degree of regulation might be necessary for engineering professions connected with quality/safety of their services and also in view to information asymmetries between service provider and service consumer/client. So the ECEC is currently working on a set of arguments for the regulation of the engineering profession that is closely orientated on the European Commission’s argumentation.

Presentations are available online on the following webpage:

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/conferences/2013/0617-access-professions/index_en.htm

The recording of the workshop can be found here:

<https://scic.ec.europa.eu/streaming/index.php?es=2&sessionno=2130eb640e0a272898a51da41363542d>

Public Procurement Directive

Also for the classical Public Procurement Directive there is the aim to reach a political agreement already by the end of the Irish Presidency in June. Another trilogue meeting took place on 21 June 2013. We will inform you in detail when a final text is available.

Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0795:FIN:EN:PDF>

European Commissions Working Group on “Bolstering the Business of Liberal Professions:

In the framework of the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan the Commission has established a special working group on liberal professions which is going to meet four times over the next 12 months. The aim of the Commission is to assess specific needs of liberal professional entrepreneurs in relation to issues such as simplification, internationalisation or access to finance. Rudi Kolbe (CEPLIS, ECEC) is part of this working group and has attended the first meeting that took place on 15 May 2013.

He has reported that the Commission, once again, is trying to assess barriers to market access/access to the profession and regulatory burdens that could be abolished or simplified. On the other hand there were some positive signals towards the necessary special approach for liberal professions. The next meeting will take place in September 2013.

Strategy for the sustainable competitiveness of the construction sector and its enterprises

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/getdocument.cfm?doc_id=7618

Meeting on “Skills & Qualifications for sustainable building from the perspective of Architects and Engineers”

The first round of the five working groups for the implementation of the strategy has taken place in spring and a second round is planned for autumn.

The ECEC is represented in the “Skills & Qualifications WG” by Vice-President Hansjörg Letzner.

Additionally Suzanne Warren - who is the responsible person in the Commission for the working groups – has assembled a group of architects and engineers to brainstorm possibilities for these professions to take a more



leading role in retrofit projects designed to achieve carbon reduction etc. As this seems to be an extremely good opportunity to stress the important role of Engineers in sustainable building President Ārtomir Remec will represent the ECEC at the meeting that is going to take place on 1 July 2013.

The European Economic and Social Committee - The challenges of the European engineering industry (mechanical, electrical, electronic and metalworking) in a changing global economy

Rudolf Kolbe is a member of one of the Consultative Committees for the European Economic and Social Committee - namely the Consultative Commission on Industrial Change (CCMI) - and is, as such, part of a working group on the topic of the challenges of mechanical/electrical/electronic engineering. The first meeting took place on 12 June 2013. Rudi Kolbe was able to get some ECEC topics into the draft report, e.g the problem of too many standardisation projects; the necessity for free access to standards; the necessity for broader participation in the making of standard; the problem of too many "certification" systems; the necessity for guarantee of high level qualifications at least for those engineering services that are closely connected to the public interest and the safety of people; the necessity to open all measures of SME financing (also for liberal professionals).

Financing for SMEs – new database

We would also like to draw your attention to the Commission's new database about the access to finance for SME. It can be helpful for Engineers as it gives a good overview of financing possibilities in the EU countries and in some cases also offers relevant contact persons / phone numbers.

http://access2eufinance.ec.europa.eu/youreurope/business/finance-support/access-to-finance/index_en.htm

AVISO – ECEC Meetings in Athens in October 2013:

Thursday, 10 October 2013

- 16.00-19.00: ECEC Executive Board meeting

Friday, 11 October 2013

- Approx. 9.30: President's meeting of European Engineering organisations in the Halls of the Greek Parliament on the occasion of the 90th Anniversary of the Technical Chamber of Greece and the 10th Anniversary of the European Council of Engineer's Chambers
- 16.00-19.00: Organisations Committee for the 2nd European Engineers' Day in 2014
- 20.00: Gala Dinner on the occasion of the 90th Anniversary of the Technical Chamber of Greece and the 10th Anniversary of the European Council of Engineer's Chambers (for all ECEC Delegates and Guests)

Saturday, 12 October 2013

- 10.00 – 16.00: ECEC GAM (for all ECEC Delegates and Guests)

(any further points of programme will be communicated in due time)