

The reason for this letter is to notify you of the great concern felt by the group of Spanish Technical Engineers - numbering approximately 400,000; 120,000 of which are Industrial Technical Engineers – regarding the amendments made by Speaker Mr. Steffano Zappalá to the Directive Proposal of the European Parliament and Council, with reference to acknowledgement of professional qualifications. We would like to highlight the severely distorting effect of the following aspects:

1/ The addition of a level 6 in training, as opposed to the five levels provided in the Proposal is contrary to the training structure in Member States and contradicts the Bologna Declaration, recently supported in Berlin.

2/ We cannot understand the reason for the level of discrimination in work experience contemplated in amendment 372 that Mr. Zappalá attributes to experience acquired in Germany, totally neglecting general terms with regard to scope, conditions and effects as contemplated in the Oreja-Gil Robles amendment.

There is no arbitrary or objective reasons that could prevent the justification of special treatment of Fachhochschulen, that cannot be equally applied to Spanish Technical Engineers.

3/ Within the framework of a General Directive, as is the Proposal that is being amended, it is unacceptable that Engineering training should receive special analysis, as in the case of the speaker, cutting the very competences of Member States by replacing the general structure of the system (studies, credits...) with a detailed and meticulous breakdown of contents.

In consideration of the above, we believe that the aforementioned amendments should be rejected in all its terms.

Yours faithfully.

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President of the General Board of Official Colleges of Industrial Technical Engineers.
President of the Union of Spanish Associations of Industrial Technical Engineering.

P.S. We enclose the Comments of the General Board of Official Colleges of Industrial Technical Engineers, on the “Zappalá Amendments” to the Directive Proposal of the European Parliament

COMMENTS FROM THE GENERAL BOARD OF OFFICIAL COLLEGES OF INDUSTRIAL TECHNICAL ENGINEERS, ON THE “ZAPPALÁ AMENDMENTS” TO THE DIRECTIVE PROPOSAL OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND COUNCIL REGARDING RECOGNITION OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

In general, our opinion on the amendments can be summarised by stating that they have a severely distorting effect (it is likely that they are on the threshold of what could be considered as an amendment in full, although the aspects that we are going to discuss refer to the amendments on Engineering) in the sense and scope of the Directive Proposal.

Indeed, the following aspects may appear to be specific, but actually they are not so:

1. The new introduction of the concept “regulated intellectual profession” implies the incorporation of an extremely elusive concept, giving rise to juridical insecurity which, at the end of the day, is contrary to the general spirit of the Directive Proposal, since the reference to studies that are at any rate of a post-secondary level, there is a prejudgement of the intellectual nature – and not purely practical or manual – of all training, qualifications and professions that result from such training, which are the object of the Directive.

2. The same occurs with the addition of level 6 of training, as opposed to the five levels provided in the Proposal; this amendment is contrary to the actual training structure in almost all Member States; it reduces educational stages or levels to unjustified levels and in fact, contradicts the Bologna Declaration, that was so frequently supported at the Berlin meeting.

3. A modern conception of qualifications and professions and professional qualifications cannot exclude work experience, with the scope,

conditions and effects contemplated in the Oreja-Gil Robles amendment; considering this amendment, the amendments that form the object of this comment, are not particularly clear in this respect, although it can be deduced that they exclude or severely minimise the value of work experience; even when (amendment 372) work experience is included for specific aspects of a transitory nature, the wording is highly difficult to accept since it is discriminatory, and consists of experience acquired precisely in Germany. Why not in Belgium, Spain, or any other EU country?

4. It cannot be denied that it may be advisable to have a specific Directive on Engineering; but what cannot be accepted is that in the present Directive, Engineering studies are totally contrary to the general framework planned, and furthermore, cutting the very competences of Member States, by replacing the general system to designate the length of studies, number of years and European credits, with a detailed breakdown of the contents of Engineering careers, with meticulous specification of knowledge that such careers must provide, in such a way that it not far from establishing the very syllabus of each career; it is hard to understand the why and the wherefore of this amendment, but whatever it may be, it is clear that it cannot be accepted.

5. Reference has already been made to specific aspects of amendment 372; but going into it in greater detail, what is the objective reason for a special consideration of Fachhochschulen?; What problem is there in granting the same rights to Spanish Industrial Technical Engineers? One must bear in mind that when an engineer has a qualification from one of the Fachhochschulen, he/she may request that his/her qualification should be acknowledged in Spain for the purpose of free provision of service, and this qualification is acknowledged as the Spanish qualification of Industrial Technical Engineer. This is why we cannot

understand why the aforementioned German qualifications should have a special consideration, without assigning the same to Spanish Industrial Technical Engineers.

6°. Finally, with reference to the amendments that are planned to be introduced in the introductory part, these are the ante-chamber or presentation of the amendments to the part containing the provisions. In particular, the amendment that intends to refer to the security of infrastructures and products, may be considered as well-intentioned, but it actually discusses matters that belong to the Directives on harmonisation and New Focus, on security of products, machines, etc., and, in short, on users' guarantees and rights.

Madrid, for Brussels, 29 September 2003.

and Council regarding recognition of professional qualifications.