



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Directorate-General for Education and Culture

Directorate A – Lifelong Learning: Education and Training policies
The Director

Brussels,
EAC.A.1/MG/gbe D(2005) 12684

Director/Secretary General

**Subject: Consultation on the European Commission Staff Working Document
“Towards a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning”**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to inform you that Commission services have recently issued a consultation document on the development of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). This will form the basis of a Europe-wide consultation process and, in this context, I am now writing to consult European industry sector associations.

The objective of the planned EQF is to create a European framework which will enable qualifications systems at the national and sectoral levels to relate to each other. This reference structure will be used on a voluntary basis and will facilitate the transfer and recognition of qualifications held by individual citizens.

I am launching the Commission’s consultation process by inviting those experts and stakeholders most directly concerned by the development and implementation of the EQF at the European, national and sectoral levels to give us their views on what the aims, structure, and content of the EQF should be. In particular, the views of industry sector associations are important because it is essential that the EQF be fully relevant to the needs of the labour market, enterprises and employees.

I attach the EQF consultation document and a description of the consultation process. I would be grateful if you could arrange a consultation of your member organisations; I look forward to receiving your feedback by the end of the year. This will inform the final content of the EQF proposal, which Commissioner Figel’ will present to the Commission in 2006 as a draft Recommendation of the European Parliament and Council.

Yours faithfully,

David Coyne

Enclosure: 1

Commission européenne, B-1049 Bruxelles / Europese Commissie, B-1049 Brussel - Belgium. Telephone: (32-2) 299 11 11.
Office: B--7 7/59. Telephone: direct line (32-2) 296.98.65. Fax: (32-2) 296.42.58.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/education_culture
E-mail: michael-g.graham@cec.eu.int

The EQF consultation process

The consultation will seek comment on the proposals in the attached Commission Staff Working Document ‘Towards a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning’, SEC(2005) 957 of 8.7.2005. This consultation document is specifically aimed at experts, stakeholders and policy-makers in the field of qualifications and qualifications systems rather than at general actors in education and training or the general public.

We are seeking the views of the European industry sector associations – it is important that all relevant stakeholders with a direct interest in lifelong learning can contribute to the shaping of the EQF, particularly those who can comment from the point of view of labour market needs. We are therefore inviting the European industry sector associations to consult in turn their member organisations.

The 32 countries participating in the Education and Training 2010 work programme are also being requested to organise their own national consultations. In addition, we are consulting, at the European level, the Bologna follow-up Group, the other European Institutions (e.g. Parliamentary committees), the relevant European associations, NGOs and networks, and the European social partners. We are asking the European bodies to consult their national members.

You will find attached an e-version of the consultation paper and a PowerPoint presentation, which you can adapt to your own needs in explaining the EQF. The paper can also be accessed at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/consultations_en.html.

To further facilitate dissemination of the consultation paper, you may wish to create links from your relevant websites to this web address and communicate them to us for inclusion in our website.

We welcome comment on any aspect of the proposed EQF. However, it will be important to respond specifically to the questions in section 9 of the paper, which seek to address the key issues surrounding the EQF, in particular, whether the EQF reference levels and descriptors are appropriate and whether national and sectoral qualifications can be related to these reference levels and descriptors.

The development of an EQF will also be discussed at the UK Presidency conference on qualifications frameworks in Glasgow on 22-23 September 2005.

We will analyse and summarize all responses from the consultation process and publish our own analysis of these. We will also publish your responses on the web, unless you indicate you wish these to remain confidential. In addition, a conference may be organised to publicise and discuss the results of the consultation in spring 2006, prior to the Commission’s final EQF proposal being submitted as a draft Recommendation of the European Parliament and Council.

Please send your responses by e-mail, by the end of December 2005, to: EQF@cec.eu.int

