

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **European Qualifications Framework: Chambers support focus but want better shape**

Following Commissioner Ján Figel's declaration yesterday evening, EUROCHAMBRES welcomes the proposal for a recommendation of the EU Parliament and of the Council on the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Improved transparency between different qualification systems will contribute to the continuation of the Copenhagen process, strengthen lifelong learning and mobility and help reach the Lisbon goals.

Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary General of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *"We are very happy to see that progress is being made on the EQF, a key aspect for Europe's competitiveness and overall transparency effort. European Chambers fully agree with the core of the proposal, and offer their expertise on education policies to make its form even better."*

### **The focus is right...**

Business appreciates that the focus has been shifted from "learning inputs" to "learning outcomes". Also, Chambers welcome that general and vocational education and training (VET) are seen as equivalents. It is of utmost importance that competencies and experience are taken into account as much as formal qualifications to make VET more attractive.

### **...but the shape can be improved.**

Chambers insist that the EQF to be a simple and easy-to-use instrument. Also, EUROCHAMBRES believes that the success of such a European meta-framework will largely depend on whether it is linked to the labour market and geared to the needs of business and industry. However, the EQF as currently proposed is very complicated. In order to be fully effective, it needs to be simplified and brought closer to companies and individuals. In particular, Chambers believe that eight reference levels are too many. Reducing the number of levels would make the EQF more transparent and easier to understand.

Mr Abruzzini concluded: *"EUROCHAMBRES has supported the development of a European Qualifications Framework since its initiation and it will continue to closely follow its developments until its adoption end of 2007."*

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EUROCHAMBRES has member organisations in 44 countries representing a network of 2,000 regional and local Chambers with over 18 million member companies.