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**ECEC News**  
December 2013



European Council  
of Engineers Chambers

## 10th ECEC General Assembly in Athens and 10th Anniversary of ECEC



On the occasion of the 10th ECEC Anniversary President Remec expressed ECEC's thanks to the three ECEC Past Presidents for all their work and efforts done for the organisation, granting each of them a present and a certificate: Rudolf Kolbe (2003 – 2006), Mirko Orešković (2006 – 2009) and Josef Robl (2009 – 2012).



Additionally an ECEC medal which is meant to be awarded to persons who made a special contribution to the values of ECEC was presented. It was accepted to award the first ECEC Medal to Prof. Dr.-Ing. e.h. Karl Kling in order to honour his outstanding and insistent efforts towards establishing a European organisation of Engineers' Chambers.

[more details](#)

The ECEC expressed warm welcome to the following guests from other Engineering organisations present at the ECEC General Assembly: World Federation of Engineering Organisations (WFEO) - President Marwan Abdelhamid  
Institute of Chartered Engineers UK (ICE) – Vice President Alan Stilwell  
European Council of Civil Engineers (ECCE) – President Fernando Branco  
Russian Society of Civil Engineers - President Michail Lachinov

## Let Engineers build Europe - ECEC Memorandum for European Parliamentary Elections in May 2014

The 10<sup>th</sup> ECEC GAM has decided to approach the candidates for seats in the European Parliament in due time before the EP elections with an ECEC Memorandum, which is an easily realizable concept with no additional burdens to tax payers expressing the importance of:

- Measures for boosting the labour market,
- The promotion of companies with innovative thinking and new technologies,
- The protection of small businesses and intellectual professions,
- Investment in infrastructure and the safeguarding of territory,
- The upgrading and renovating of existing building stock,
- Investment in the 'green economy' and the renewable energy sector,
- Increasing the efficiency and accessibility of public administration,
- The simplification of legislation.

The ECEC Executive Board will finalize the paper in January 2014 and present it to politics and public at the official opening of the new ECEC Liaisons office in Brussels in March 2014. Additionally all ECEC member organisations will be asked to present it to their national candidates for the elections for the European Parliament in May 2014.

[more details](#)

## Associated Membership in ECEC



At the 10<sup>th</sup> ECEC GAM the ECEC delegates also took the decision to open up the ECEC to organisations that do not fulfil the strict accession criteria in regard to the requirement of being a representative public body based on national law representing chartered engineers registered according to national law. Associated members will pay a fixed lump sum and will be able to benefit from the whole ECEC information network and the lobbying activities. They will be able to participate in working groups but will have no active and passive voting rights in the General Assembly. The ECEC has decided to take this step as it had shown that it might be helpful for the profession to cooperate closer also with national organisations which cannot fulfil the above mentioned requirements but

share the aims of the ECEC.

## New ECEC Working Group on Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

According to the decision of the 10<sup>th</sup> ECEC GAM who accepted an action plan of ECEC on CPD, a new ECEC Working Group on CPD was established. Up to now 11 ECEC member organisations have already nominated their participants: Astrid Nageler-Reidlinger (Austria), Stefan Kinarev (Bulgaria), Christodoulos Hadjiodysseos (Cyprus), Alois Materna (Czech Republic), Mile Dimitrovski / Dimce Atanasovski (FYR of Macedonia), Jorgos Athanasopoulos (Greece), Hansjörg Letzner (Italy), Duško Lučić (Montenegro), Zygmunt Meyer (Poland), Dragoslav Sumarac (Serbia) and Željko Vukelić (Slovenia). Vice President Sumarac is responsible for this topic and will chair the new Working group and is planning to convene the first meeting in Belgrade in February 2014 in order to discuss the suggested ECEC action plan on CPD and the steps to its implementation.

## EU Professional Engineer – European Round table in Maribor



On 14 November 2013 ten ECEC member organisations participated at the Regional Engineers Day in Maribor and the European Round Table discussion on "EU Professional Engineer".

There were three main topics of discussion, all based on the new European Qualifications Directive:

- the European Professional Card (EPC) for Engineers which is likely to be introduced until the beginning of 2016,
- Common Training Framework (CTF) based on European Qualification Framework (EQF),
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

Already in October 2013 the ECEC has reacted to the European Commission's call of interest and to the discussions that had previously taken place between the ECEC and the European Commission and has expressed the ECECs strong interest in the development of a EU Professional Card for Chartered (licenced) Engineers and the request to be included in the implementation working group. The ECEC has stressed the view that National Engineers Chambers should be nominated as competent authorities in regard to the EPC as they are responsible for the registers of chartered (licenced) engineers, hold disciplinary procedures against their members and in many countries issue recognitions of professional qualifications according to the Professional Qualifications Directive.

The participants of the Round Table worked out four necessary steps for the ECEC in regard to the implementation of the European Professional Card for Engineers / the implementation of the Professional Qualifications Directive:

- ECEC must be active in the European Commission's Working Group preparing the implementation act on the

- European Professional Card
- ECEC member organisations should strive to become „competent authorities“ in their member states for recognition of professional qualifications as national competent authorities will be issuing the European Professions Cards
  - ECEC should prepare a Common Training Framework (CTF) based on European Qualification Framework (EQF);
  - ECEC should prepare a CPD program for chartered engineers and suggest ways for motivating/obliging professionals to participate in lifelong learning; data about CPD should be incorporated into the European Professional Card

The implementation of these steps will be discussed at the next Executive Board meeting on 25 January 2014.

## European Commission's sustainable construction action plan

The so called High Level Tripartite Strategic Forum (HLF) , which monitors the overall progress of the implementation of the European Commission's action plan to promote the construction sector, has met on 29 November 2013 in Brussels to discuss the various recommendations and suggested measures of the five thematic working groups that were active during the last year. The HLF is a tripartite group, consisting of the Commission, Member States and sectorial representatives. As the Action plan contains many aspects that are relevant for the profession of Chartered Engineers - such as for example the stimulation of investment in building renovation, infrastructure and innovation, the sustainable use of natural resources and lifecycle-costing - the ECEC was represented by President Remec. Additionally ECEC Vice-President Hansjörg Letzner has participated in one of the working groups (skills and qualifications). More details on the current status of the implementation of the action plan:

[more details](#)

## ECEC Medal was awarded in Maribor on 14 November 2013



The first ECEC medal for persons who made a special contribution to the values of ECEC was awarded to Prof. Dr.-Ing. e.h. Karl Kling in order to honour his outstanding and insistent efforts towards establishing a European organisation of Engineers' Chambers. The award was based on an unanimous decision of the Executive Board that was supported by the 10<sup>th</sup> ECEC General Assembly.

[more details](#)

## New ECEC Representation in Brussels

Due to the developments within the German Chamber of Architects (BAK) in 2013 the ECEC had to terminate the contract about the common EU Liaisons office in Brussels. The new ECEC representation in Brussels will start its work in January 2014. It will be situated at the premises of CEPLIS, in which a room for smaller meetings is also available. There will be a part-time employee responsible for ECEC concerns. Additionally the regular CEPLIS staff will be available for support. All the CEPLIS contacts, networks and expertise will be fully available to the ECEC.

The official opening which is scheduled for March 2014 will be combined with the presentation of the ECEC Memorandum "Let Engineers build Europe".

## European Public Procurement Legislation – updated timetable

A political agreement on the text of all three Procurement directives was reached in the trilogue negotiations in June 2013, the adoption in the EP plenary session and in the Council are scheduled for January 2014, the formal signatures for February 2014 and the entry into force approximately for March 2014 (20 days after publication in the official journal). The implementation period is 2 years.

[more details](#)

## European Professional Qualifications Directive - update

Following the vote by the EP in plenary in October and the adoption by the Council on 15 November 2013, the new Professional Qualifications Directive has been formally signed by co-legislators on 20 November 2013 in Strasbourg. The Directive will be published this year or at the beginning of next year and enters into force 20 days after publication. The implementation period is two years.

The most important achievement for ECEC is that the professional card as it is now very much follows the concept that was suggested by the ECEC. It has been clarified that a professional card is an electronic certificate within the IMI system that can only be issued by the competent authority. The ECEC has already expressed its interest for a European Professional Card for Engineers. Results of the European Commission's Call for expressions of interest:

[more details](#)

Another important aspect of the new Directive is the concept of the Common Framework of Art 49a as it can be a possibility for certain engineering professions to gain something similar to automatic recognition. Nevertheless it is a problem that the common training frameworks shall be based on the levels of the European Qualifications Framework and not – as the ECEC would have preferred – on the qualification levels of Art 11. The regulation explicitly says that it shall be irrelevant whether the knowledge, skills and competences have been acquired as part of a general training course at university or a higher training institute or as a part of a vocational training course. The ECEC sees a university education of 5 years as the necessary minimum for the education of Chartered engineers and definitely do not see any possibility to compensate that with vocational training.

The ECEC sees it positive that the qualification levels of Art. 11 remain in the Directive. Nevertheless the system has been completely undermined - especially problematic are the changes in Art. 13 (4). The requirement that recognition for the same profession is only possible when the qualification level of the applicant is not lower than one level under the required level in the host Member State has fallen and the Commission explicitly says that the five levels can no longer be used in order to exclude applicants whose qualifications are too low. Practically that means that also applicants with much lower qualifications can apply for access to professions for which a University degree is required. This will lead to additional practical efforts and costs in view to compensation measures. Additionally we see a danger of complete erosion of academic qualifications and of highly qualified national professions. Especially in the case of engineering services this is indeed very dangerous and undesirable as many of these services are provided in public interest and therefore have an impact on quality of life, security and health of persons.

A very important aspect of the Directive for regulated professions is Art. 59. Also the European Commission's communication on the evaluation of national regulations on access to professions – from 2 October 2013 - is based on this Article which requires from all EU Member States a detailed report on each nationally regulated profession and the necessity for this regulation. As already stressed before, it is very important for the professional organisations to ensure that they are included in this evaluation procedure.