

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003412/26
to the Commission
Loucas Fourlas (PPE)
(1 September 2026)**

Subject: Administrative obstacles to the recognition of professional qualifications and the mobility of doctors in the EU

Free movement of professionals and mutual recognition of professional qualifications are fundamental principles of the European Union.

However, a specific case of a European doctor who moved to Belgium to specialise in obstetrics and gynaecology raises serious questions about the administrative obstacles that health professionals who wish to practise their profession in another Member State still face.

This case raises serious questions about the effectiveness and transparency of national procedures applied to health professionals within the EU.

In view of the above:

1. Does the Commission consider it compatible with EU law that a European doctor may, due to lengthy and complex administrative procedures for the recognition of professional qualifications, be denied the possibility of continuing to practise a specialism?
2. What measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure that Member States implement procedures to recognise professional qualifications that are transparent and completed within reasonable and predictable time limits?
3. What protection does EU law provide for European citizens who have obtained their professional qualifications in the United Kingdom, in particular after Brexit?

Submitted: 1.9.2026

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu on behalf of the European Commission
(13 October 2026)**

Directive 2005/36/EC ⁽¹⁾ regulates substantive and procedural aspects of recognition of professional qualifications for regulated professions. It lays down harmonised minimum training requirements for certain professions, including specialist doctors, allowing them to benefit from automatic recognition.

In the case of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, the mutual recognition of professional qualifications in the EU should be based on the evidence of formal qualifications (specialist diplomas) listed in point 5.1.3. of the Annex V to the directive ⁽²⁾.

Following recognition, and before authorising a specialist doctor to practise, a host Member State may test the language knowledge necessary for practising the profession, as well as verify their good professional standing.

The directive sets out procedural rules, including deadlines for issuing recognition decisions. The Commission monitors Member States' compliance and, in the event of systematic breaches, may initiate infringement procedures.

In addition to helping Member States comply with the existing rules (and enforcing compliance where necessary), the Commission, under its proposal for a Skills Portability Initiative, adopted on 15 September 2026 as part of the Fair Labour Mobility Package, has included measures to digitalise and modernise procedures and reduce deadlines for recognition of professional qualifications ⁽³⁾.

In the same initiative, it has also proposed measures to facilitate the recognition by Member States of third-country qualifications ⁽⁴⁾. These latter measures may be relevant for UK qualifications obtained after 1 January 2021 since currently they are treated as third-country qualifications, and their recognition is governed solely by national rules.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02005L0036-20250710>.

⁽²⁾ Currently, for Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Annex V contains diplomas of all Member States as well as the UK diplomas issued before 1 January 2021.

⁽³⁾ https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/document/3dd280d9-8a49-4f32-a992-515a97afb212_en.

⁽⁴⁾ https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/document/db63b882-fcb9-42cf-8d1f-644994beb55b_en.