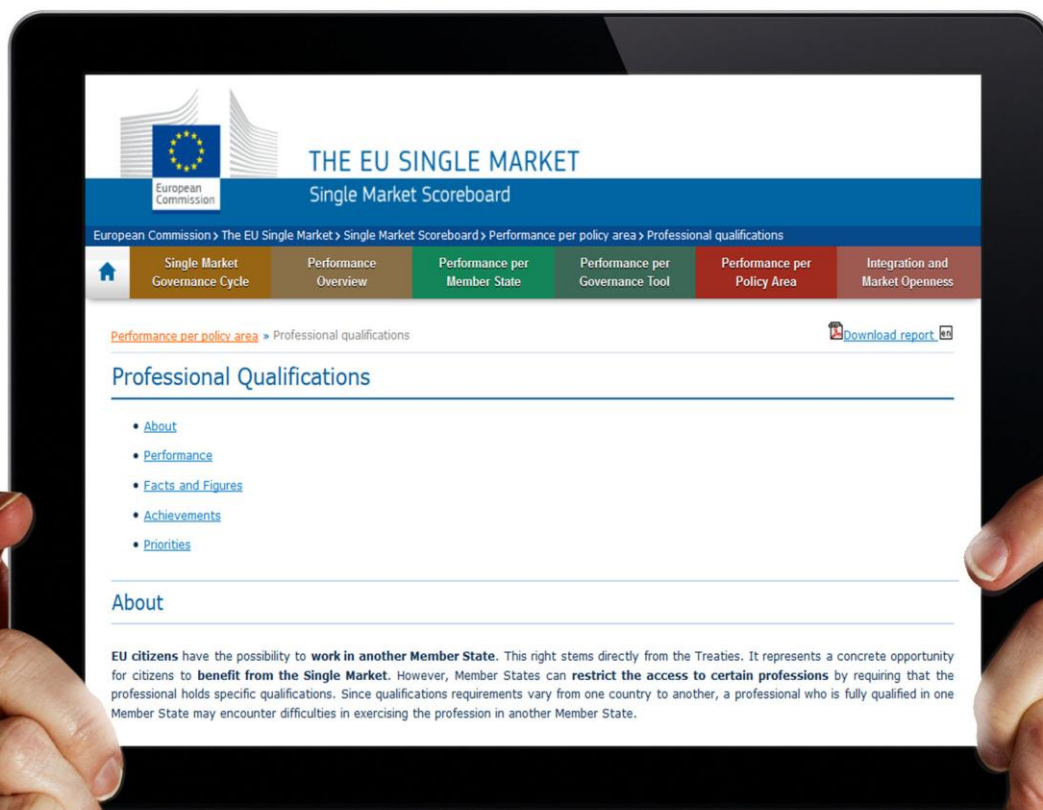


Single Market Scoreboard

Performance per Policy Area

Professional Qualifications

(Reporting period: 2014 - 2016)



About

Under EU law, **EU citizens** can live and **work in another EU country**. It is one way for people to **benefit directly from the single market**.

However, EU countries can **limit the access to some professions**, by e.g. requiring certain professionals to have specific qualifications.

Rules on qualifications vary between countries. So someone who is fully qualified in one EU country may find it hard to exercise their profession in another EU country. Getting your qualifications recognised can be **complicated, expensive, and time-consuming**.

This affects the free movement of services and people, which in turn has an impact on people's ability to set up their business and/or to provide services in another EU country, as well as on the number of skilled workers available to businesses across the EU.

The [Professional Qualifications Directive](#) (Directive 2013/55 amending Directive 2005/36/EC) is designed to **overcome these problems**. It provides for the rules on the recognition of professional qualifications of professionals who are fully qualified in one EU country and wish to practice the same profession in another EU country. It sets out the following systems for people who want to work in another EU country on a permanent basis:

- **general system;** (with a possibility to impose compensatory measures)
- **automatic recognition** (based on harmonised minimum training requirements or professional experience)

General system

Professionals who want to move to another EU country need to apply to the competent authority in the EU country they're moving to have their qualifications recognised.

Competent authorities look at the length and content of the training followed (along with other accompanying documents) to see if there are substantial differences between this training and the qualifications required in the host EU country for that profession.

If there are major differences, the authorities can impose '**compensatory measures**' on the applicant. This means that they might have to take an **aptitude test** or complete an **adaptation period**.

Automatic recognition

This system covers a **limited number of professions**, but does not allow for compensatory measures:

- **health professions** (doctors, nurses responsible for general care, dental practitioners, veterinary surgeons and pharmacists)
- **architects**

For these two categories, the person must meet the minimum training conditions set out in the Directive.

In addition, the professions in trade industry and business can benefit from automatic recognition of their qualifications by way of meeting the minimum professional experience requirements.

Performance

The Performance is assessed in terms of recognition rates across EU countries.

These statistics refer to decisions made by the authorities in the host country for professionals qualified in one EU country (ie. the home country) who apply for recognition of their qualifications in another EU country (ie. the host country) to practice their permanently.

The data in this section comes from the Commission's [database on regulated professions](#) and refers to the period **2014-16**. As the information on recognition decisions comes directly from **national competent authorities**, the Commission receives the statistics at different times, with a delay of about one year.

The 3-year reporting period makes it possible to smooth out any anomalies caused by the submission date of the statistics. But because our database does not contain data for that period for all countries, for some we have analysed data for other (but still recent) 3-year periods:

BG, CY, EE, IE, IT, LV, MT, SK: 2013-2015

DE: 2011-2013

EL: 2010-12

HU: 2012, 2013, 2015

NL: 2009, 2010, 2015

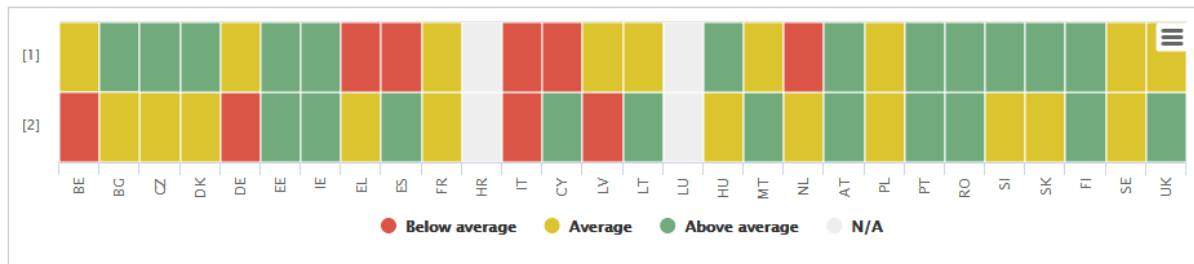
SI: 2013, 2015, 2016

No recent data available for HR and LU

Relying on these data, **2 indicators** are particularly important:

- **positive recognition decisions** as a proportion of all decisions made in the host country in 2014-16.
- **quick positive recognition decisions** (*i.e. a positive decision without compensatory measures imposed, in the general system*), as a proportion of all decisions made in the host country in 2014-16.

1. By indicator



Source: Database on regulated professions (*validated up to 15 November 2017*).
 Note: BG, CY, EE, IE, IT, LV, MT, SK: 2013-15; DE: 2011-13; EL: 2010-12; HU: 2012, 2013, 2015; NL: 2009, 2010, 2015; SI: 2013, 2015, 2016. No recent data available for HR and LU.

[1] Positive decisions	> 99.26%	88.51% – 99.26%	< 88.51%
[2] Positive decisions taken without compensatory measures	> 46.73%	23.60% – 46.73%	< 23.60%

Each EU country's performance on the 2 indicators is calculated by scoring each indicator in chart 1 as follows, the average band being calculated as baseline, plus or minus half the standard deviation:

- **GREEN** – countries **significantly above the EU average** (*higher than the average + ½ standard deviation mark*).
- **YELLOW** – countries **close to the EU average** (*within the average +/- ½ standard deviation band*).
- **RED** – countries **significantly below the EU average** (*lower than the average - ½ standard deviation mark*).

The EU average positive recognition rate (indicator 1) is 93.5%, with a standard deviation of 9.2% and the EU average *quick* positive recognition rate (indicator 2) is 36.1%, with a standard deviation of 20.7%. This means indicator 2 is much more dispersed than indicator 1.

2. Overall (the 2 indicators combined)



[Leaflet](#) | Credit: [EC-GISCO](#), © EuroGeographics for the administrative boundaries

Each EU country's performance on the 2 indicators is calculated by scoring each indicator in chart 1 as follows: RED = -1, YELLOW = 0 and GREEN = +1.

The colours on the map represent the **average of these scores**.

There are **major variations in recognition rates** between EU countries. This may be influenced by several factors such as the following:

- resources available for & dedication to managing the applications
- number of applicants
- complexity of the regulation

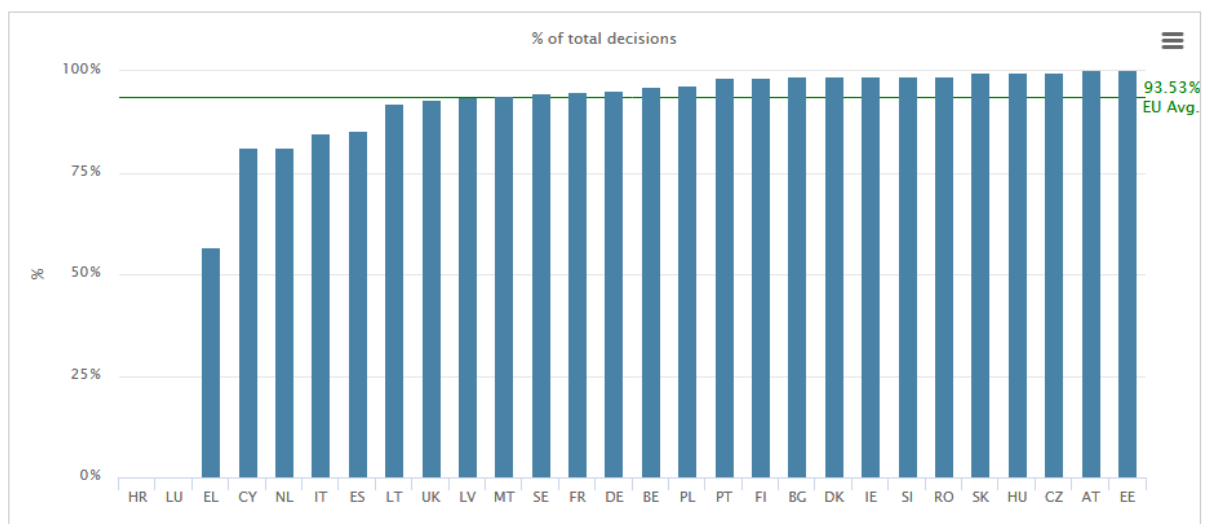
However, a **higher response and recognition rate**, generally means it is **easier and/or cheaper** for professionals to have their qualifications recognised.

In 2014-16, of the **152 066 cases** recorded in the database on regulated professions:

- **83.3%** (126 673) were concluded by a decision – either positive (118,480) or negative (8 193);
- the remaining **16.7%** (25 393 cases) were either unsettled (no decision taken), under examination or subject to appeals.

⚠ For the following countries, the data analysed were from *periods other than 2014-16*: BG, CY, EE, IE, IT, LV, MT, SK: 2013-2015; DE: 2011-13; EL: 2010-12; HU 2012, 2013, 2015; NL: 2009, 2010, 2015; SI: 2013, 2015, 2016. No recent data available for HR and LU.

Indicator 1 – Positive recognition decisions



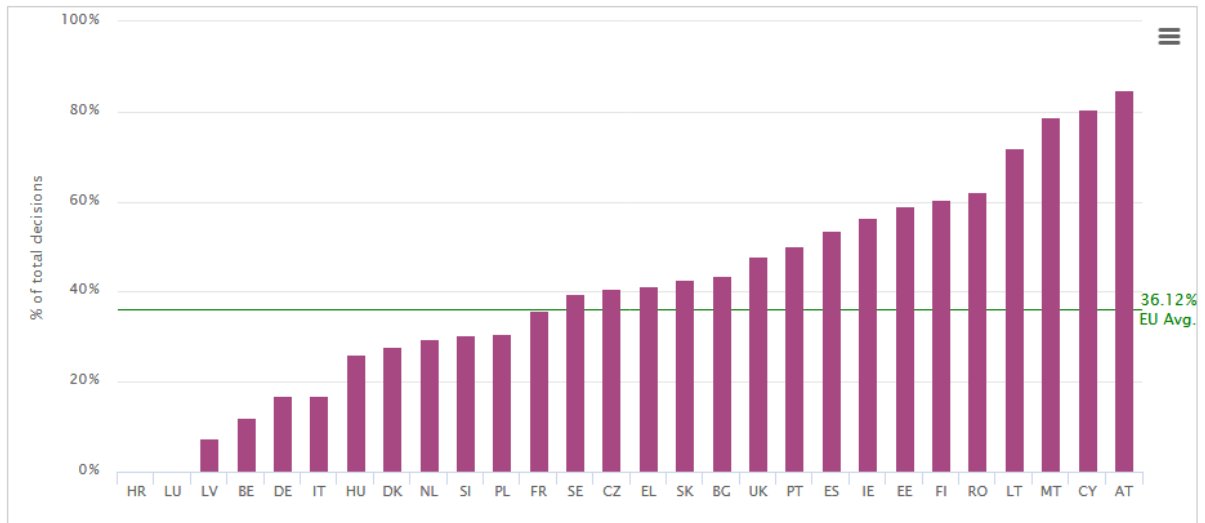
This indicator shows, for each host country, **positive recognition decisions** as a percentage of total recognition decisions (126 673).

EU averages

- positive recognition - **93.5%**
- negative recognition - **6.5%**

The highest positive recognition rates were found in Estonia (100.0%) and Austria (99.9%), followed by the Czech Republic and Hungary (both 99.7%) and Romania (99.6%). The lowest rates were recorded in Greece (56.6%), Cyprus and the Netherlands (both 81.2%), Italy (84.7%) and Spain (85.4%). As indicated in Chart 2.

Indicator [2]: Quick positive recognition decisions (without compensatory measures)



Source: Database on regulated professions (validated up to 15 November 2017).

Note: BG, CY, EE, IE, IT, LV, MT; SK: 2013-15; DE: 2011-13; EL: 2010-12; HU: 2012, 2013, 2015; NL: 2009, 2010, 2015; SI: 2013, 2015, 2016. No recent data available for HR and LU.

This indicator shows, for each host country, **positive decisions taken without compensatory measures** (e.g. aptitude test or a traineeship) as a percentage of total decisions.

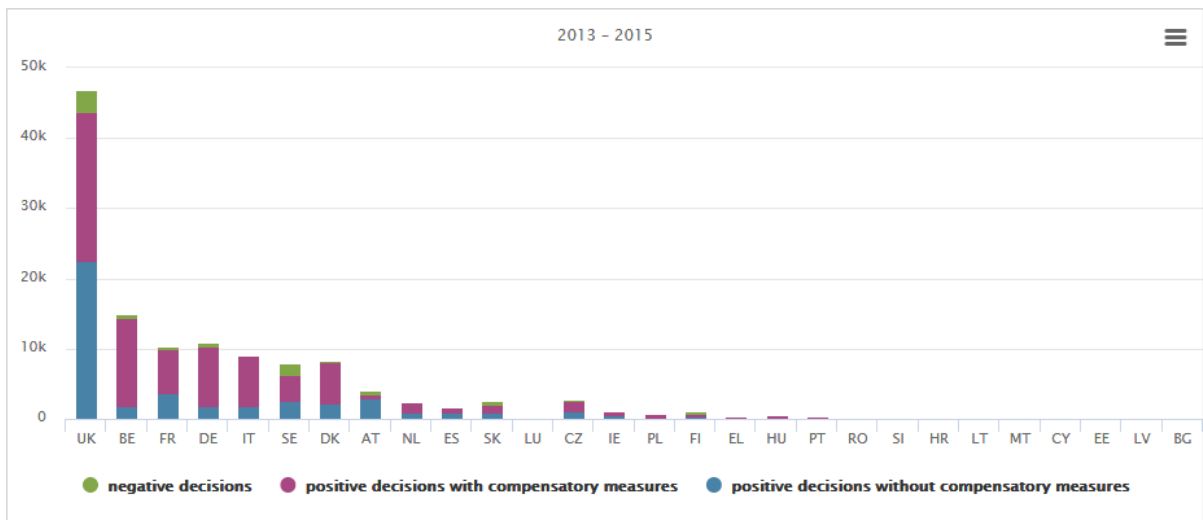
EU average

- quick positive recognition – **36.1%** The highest quick positive recognition rates are found in Austria (84.8%), Cyprus (80.4%) and Malta (78.8%). The lowest rates are recorded in Latvia (7.5%), Belgium (12.0%) and Germany (16.7%). As indicated in Chart 3.

Facts and Figures

Charts 2 and 3 summarise the findings regarding the number of decisions made by host countries in the recent period.

Total number of decisions by host country



Source: Database on regulated professions (validated up to 15 November 2017).

Note: BG, CY, EE, IE, IT, LV, MT; SK: 2013-15; DE: 2011-13; EL: 2010-12; HU: 2012, 2013, 2015; NL: 2009, 2010, 2015; SI: 2013, 2015, 2016. No recent data available for HR and LU.

Variations in number of decisions reported

The number of decisions reported are different in each country, due to a combination of factors:

- the **size of the country** — usually, the bigger the country the higher the number of decisions;
- some countries **attract more professionals** than others and so proportionally will receive more requests than bigger countries or countries of the same size
- **not all EU countries report their statistics** on recognition decisions in the same detail or as often — this can distort the true picture.

Positive recognition decisions in 2014-16

Out of the 101,626 positive decisions made in the 2014-2016 period (taking into account only the data for that period), most cases were found in the following:

By profession

- Nurses: 22 300
- Doctors of medicine: 14 200
- Secondary school teachers: 17 000

By country

1st – the **UK**, with **43 600** professionals hosted over 2014-16, including nearly 16 000 **nurses** (around 4 400 from Spain, 3 500 from Romania and 3 100 from Italy), followed by **secondary school teachers** (15,000) and **doctors** (nearly 6,000).

2nd – **Belgium**, with **14 300** professionals hosted over 2014-16, including 2 700 **nurses** (mostly from France) and 2,400 **doctors** (mostly from Romania).

3rd – **France**, with **9,900** professionals hosted over 2014-16, including nearly 1,900 **physiotherapists** (mostly from Belgium and Spain) and 1,500 **architects** (mostly from Italy).

As far as **Germany** is concerned, which ranks 3rd in Chart 3, **10 300** professionals were granted a positive decision over the 2011-13 period, among whom 6 600 **doctors** (1 700 from Romania, 1 500 from Austria and 700 from Spain), followed by **secondary school teachers** (900) and **nurses** (750).

Main country-to-country flows in a selection of professions

This part of the analysis focuses on the 2010-16 period, and those professions which recorded the highest numbers of positive recognition decisions in recent years: dental practitioners, doctors in medicine, nurses, physiotherapists and secondary school teachers.

Host countries recording the highest numbers of arrivals of professionals active in these five professions are the UK, with close to 75 500, followed by Germany (15 500 (*)), Belgium (11 000), Sweden (10 000) and France (9 500). [(*) Germany: data for 2007-2013]

Home Countries with the highest numbers of professionals leaving their territory to provide their services in another EU country are Spain (close to 26 500), Romania (22 500), Greece (15 500), Poland and Portugal (both roughly 10 500).

Main country-to-country flows in a selection of professions

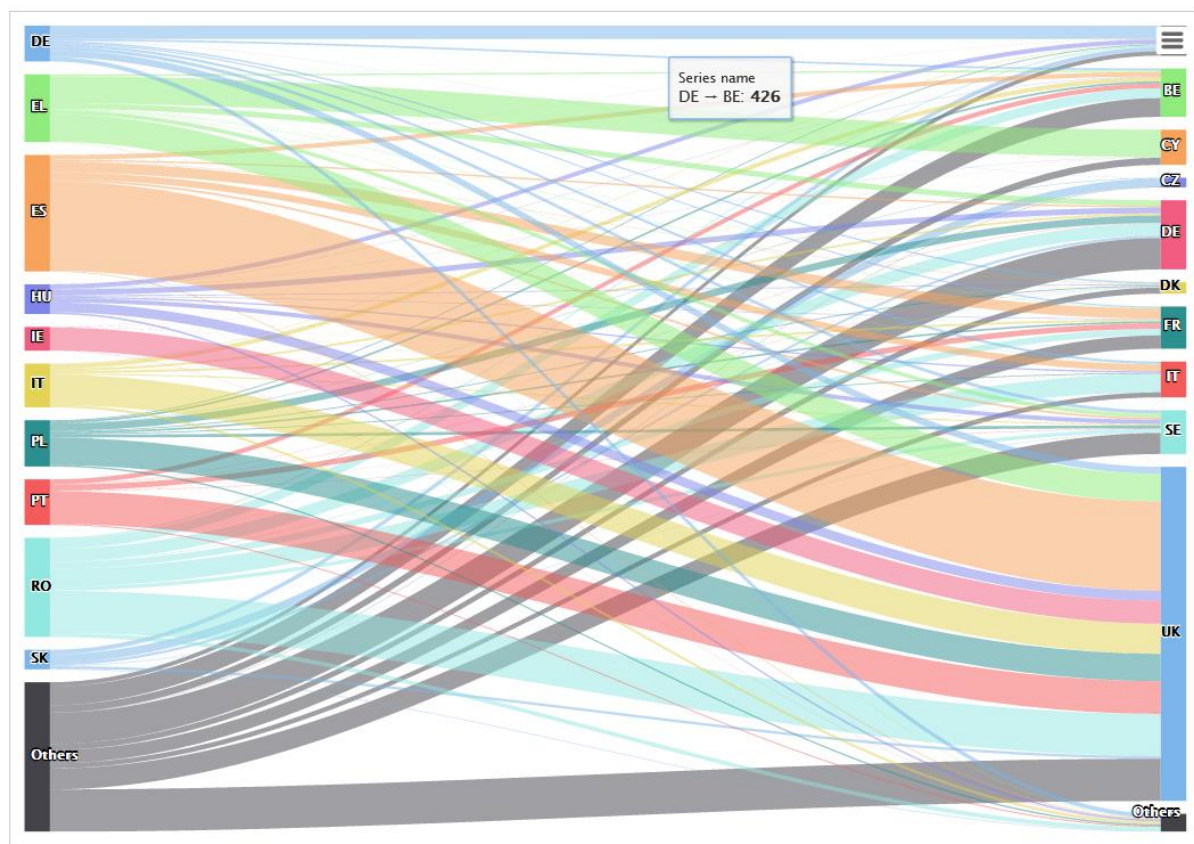
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Country-to-country Flow



Achievements

- The EU is a **global pioneer** in systematically applying mutual recognition to the professional qualifications among Member States.
- The Commission continuously monitors Member States' compliance with their obligations under Directive 2005/36/EC on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications. It seeks to ensure full **transposition of the Professional Qualifications Directive**, as last amended by Directive 2013/55/EU, supported by the mutual evaluation exercise 2014-16 and the 24 national action plans so far delivered.
- The 2013 update of the Directive (2013/55/EU) has simplified the recognition process, through digitalisation of the recognition process. EU countries had to implement the Directive by 18 January 2016.
- The 2013 Directive introduced the [European professional card](#), the first alternative electronic procedure harmonised at EU level, helping citizens get their professional qualifications recognised more quickly and easily. It is supported by the Internal Market Information System (IMI). The card became available in January 2016 for general care nurses, physiotherapists, pharmacists, real estate agents and mountain guides, which was received positively by stakeholders.
- In parallel, the revised Directive introduced, in specific sectors (namely health and education of minors) an **alert mechanism**, to flag up people who are barred from practicing their profession or have used falsified qualifications.
- Between 2013 and 2016 Commission has also carried out a mutual evaluation exercise, in which Member States reviewed the regulation of over 5,500 regulated professions. These discussions have led to specific sector reports for selected professions, and 24 national action plans so far delivered.
- As a result of the **transparency exercise** introduced by the revision of the Professional Qualifications Directive in 2013, all regulated professions in the EU can be easily identified on the **European map of regulated professions**.

Priorities

- Continue enforcement efforts, including **full transposition of the Directive**.
- Ensure that the Services Package, adopted by the Commission on 10 January 2017, is being implemented. As far as professional services are concerned, the Package contains:
 - a common EU-wide framework in a form of a **proportionality test** [hyperlink to communication] including the criteria that Member States would need to assess before introducing new or amending national provisions on regulated professions. This process will make it easier for Member States to ensure that their new or amended regulation of professions is proportionate, as required by EU law.[to be revised in March]
 - **recommendations on reform needs** [hyperlink to communication] for each EU country, indicating possibilities for reform of specific professional

regulations, based on qualitative and quantitative assessment of national regulation.

- In particular, make sure the new directive on a proportionality test is, once adopted, properly enforced, supported by a new on-line form in the database on regulated professions and later on through the Internal Market Information system (IMI). [to be revised in March]
- Follow-up of the recommendations and the way these are being applied by national authorities.
- To help this assessment, the Commission has developed a **composite indicator** to support the comparative analysis of barriers across Member States. The new indicator measures the intensity of restrictiveness of national regulation in 7 key professions and enables benchmarking of regulatory differences across Member States and by group of professions.