

Internal Market Information System (IMI)

The European Union, in order to facilitate the professional activities of its citizens in other Member States, has enacted two relevant Directives, concerning the recognition of professional qualifications (Directive 2005/36/EC) and the provision of Services (Directive 2006/123/EC). The provisions of these Directives have been transferred to national legislation with the enactment of the Law on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications of 2008 (L. 31(I)/2008) and the Freedom to Establish the Provision of Services and the Free Movement of Services Law of 2010 (L. 76(I)/2010).

Within the scope of applying these Directives, the European Commission has developed an electronic tool/system for the exchange of information, the Internal Market Information System (IMI).

The IMI System is intended to support the administrative cooperation and simplification of procedures required for practicing professionals and active service providers in other member states in the European Union and the European Free Trade Association (E.F.T.A.). Only Authorities that have competence in relation to the recognition of professional qualifications and the provision of services have access to the IMI system. The system provides the Authorities with the possibility of exchanging information through standard questions, for professionals and providers of services who wish to be active in another Member State.

The Competent Authority of a Member State that accepts applications for registration on its Register from professionals and service providers who are registered with corresponding Authorities of other Member States, may, through the system find the corresponding Authorities and, through the standard questions provided by the system, collect information concerning the applicants, which are relevant to the subject matter of their application.

The IMI System includes, *inter alia*, an "alert mechanism" providing the competent authorities with the ability to notify the authorities of other member states of every activity which might cause serious damage to the health or safety of persons or to the environment.

The Coordinators of the IMI System may also act as Competent Authorities and as such may send or receive requests for information. Furthermore, the "Incoming Alert Post box" Coordinator and the Alert Coordinators may notify the authorities of other member states as to the provision of services which may cause serious damage to the health or safety of persons or to the environment through the "alert mechanism".

For further information as to how the Internal Market Information System operates you may visit <http://ec.europa.eu/imi-net> or link through the website of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism on <http://www.mcit.gov.cy>