

28 March 2012

Ms. Anna Diamantopolou
Minister for Development, Competitiveness and Shipping
Ministry of Development, Competitiveness and Marine Affairs
Mesogeion 119
Athens
10192
Greece

Dear Ms. Diamantopolou

I am writing on behalf of the European Federation of Chemical Engineering (EFCE) to raise our concerns regarding law 3982/2011, which is currently under consideration by the Hellenic Parliament. We also have concerns over the draft Presidential Decrees, which address the important matter of licensing the technical professions, including those educated to diploma degree level. We understand that this legislation represents a first step in establishing modern terms and conditions for the licensing of technical professions in Greece and for conducting quality control of services provided. We believe that the purpose of the new legislation is to limit the number of licenses issued and to establish new conditions and requirements for engineering qualifications with the aim of making your procedures more simple and transparent.

Whilst the EFCE is entirely supportive of measures to reduce bureaucracy and simplify matters relating to licensing, the Federation wishes to ensure that any such measures do not undermine the position of chemical engineers in Europe by creating unfair advantage for other professional groups that do not possess the same technical expertise. As such, the current shape of the legislation is problematic.

We are advised by colleagues at the Hellenic Association of Chemical Engineers that the law, along with the draft decrees currently under consideration, only permit qualified mechanical, electrical and naval engineers to pursue 'higher level' technical activities insofar as they relate to 'entire installations' of any kind. Other qualified engineers, including chemical engineers, will only be permitted to exercise their authority with limited access to the full range of professional activities and only on specific subcategories of a particular 'installation'. The Federation believes that this approach is unduly proscriptive, effectively preventing a qualified chemical engineer from undertaking specific 'professional technical activities', as defined in Article 2 of Hellenic law, at 'technical installations', as defined in Article 3 of Hellenic law, most of which are entirely within their area of professional competence. Furthermore, paragraph 10 of Article 5 clearly protects the interests of mechanical, electrical and naval engineers to the disadvantage of the professional chemical engineer and with the consequence of increased risk of technical failure.

The chemical engineering skill set is essential to securing future recovery and economic growth in Greece and throughout Europe. Chemical engineers will be central to securing sustainable development in many important areas, including energy generation, food production, water supply, environmental protection, chemical and pharmaceutical production, oil and gas processing and distribution and similar industries. Article 3 of Hellenic law defines much of the activity in this sphere, for example, *installations for the extraction of crude oil and natural gas, combustion installations of liquid and gaseous fuels and installations for the storage of hazardous materials*. Such activities are core competencies of a chemical engineer and the EFCE contends that the measures under consideration by Greece will limit the career prospects of Greek chemical engineers and restrict the free movement of European chemical engineers in Greece. Furthermore, the proposals as currently

formulated, may contravene the European Directive on Professional Services (2006/123/EC), which prohibits regulations and administrative processes that are unnecessary, disproportionate or discriminatory.

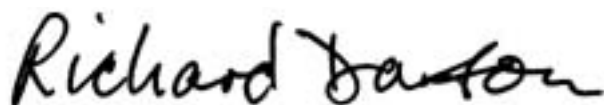
In addition, we would ask you to evaluate the draft decrees in the context of the European Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (2005/36/EC). This legislation reinforces the status of the 'European Engineer' and use of the pre-nominal title 'Eur Ing' as defined by Fédération Européenne d'Associations Nationales d'Ingénieurs (FEANI). We note that Greece is a signatory to the FEANI register. The EFCE supports the principles embraced by FEANI and whilst the Federation acknowledges that the title does not confer a general license to practice and nor does it provide legal authority to offer services to the public, we note that Directive generally exempts the bearer from additional examinations within the European Union.

In conclusion, the Federation is committed to supporting the chemical and process engineering community throughout Europe. We believe that innovation and economic growth can flourish against a backdrop of appropriate professional regulation. Given the central importance of chemical and process engineering to European competitiveness and growth, we urge the Hellenic government to pay heed to the views of a broad range of professional engineering opinion, including that of the Hellenic Association of Chemical Engineers. It would be most unfortunate if your government were to implement measures that might restrict the activities of appropriately qualified chemical engineers.

I look forwards to hearing from you on this important matter.

Yours sincerely

For the European Federation of Chemical Engineering

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard Darton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being more prominent than the last name "Darton".

Professor Richard Darton
EFCE President

cc Jerzy Buzek, Past President European Parliament
Alexander Italianer, Director General EC Competition Directorate
Prof. George Babiniotis, Minister of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs
Kostas Vafiadis, President Hellenic Association of Chemical Engineers
Christos Spirtzis, President Technical Chamber of Greece