

European Commission
DG Internal Market, Industry,
Entrepreneurship and SMEs

By Email: [GROW- REGPROF_CONSULTATION2016@ec.europa.eu](mailto:GROW-REGPROF_CONSULTATION2016@ec.europa.eu)

Vienna, 17.08.2016

Re: Consultation on the regulation of professions: Member States' Actions Plans and proportionality in regulation

The Austrian Medical Chamber is a public body established by law (i.e. Austrian Medical Act) and enshrined in the Austrian constitution. It is the statutory professional organization of all doctors practising in Austria and represents approximately 44.000 doctors working either in a self-employed or in an employed capacity. On the one hand, the Austrian Medical Chamber represents their professional, social and economic interests, on the other hand, it constitutes the competent national authority for Austrian doctors.

Dear Madam, dear Sir,

The Austrian Medical Chamber would like to submit the following comments with regard to the EC Consultation on the regulation of professions.

We would like to point out that policy decisions relating to the regulation of the medical profession must always be directed at the objective of attaining the best possible quality of care for every patient. Quality of care, access to care or patient safety must not be put at risk at any time by decisions driven by other objectives, in particular economic concerns.

Therefore, we underline the importance of effective regulatory frameworks for doctors. Regulations regarding education, training, or professional practice are needed to ensure legal clarity and must not be considered as disproportionate "red tape".

Furthermore, we would like to reiterate that health care services cannot be compared to those of solely economic nature as the demand and supply of health care services is not subject to usual market forces.

Therefore, we oppose to apply assumptions based on the economic effects of (de-)regulating market based sectors to the regulation of the medical profession without taking into account the specific nature of the medical profession and health care services.

Also, we would like to point out that the European Commission itself has acknowledged the need for regulation of healthcare professions in its Communication on evaluating national regulations on access to professions (COM (2013) 676).

The Austrian Medical Chamber, therefore, calls on the European Commission to respect the established national structures of professional regulation when assessing access to the healthcare profession, and especially to the medical profession as such.

Yours sincerely



Dr. Artur Wechselberger
President of the Austrian Medical Chamber