

FEANI

THE EUROPEAN ENGINEERS' FEDERATION CELEBRATED ITS 60th ANNIVERSARY

“Dear ladies and gentlemen, dear FEANI national members, dear members of the European Parliament, dear associates and friends, it is a pleasure for me - as President of FEANI, on behalf of MEP, Miss Emma McCLARKIN and the FEANI Executive Board - to welcome you all today, to the prestigious Bibliothèque Solvay.”

This is how Mr Lars BYTOFT, President of FEANI, opened FEANI's New Year's Reception and 60th Birthday Dinner on 31 January 2012.



Menu of the Dinner

The European Engineers' Federation (FEANI) could hardly have chosen a better place in Brussels to celebrate its anniversary. The room, almost exactly 100 years ago, gathered people such as Albert Einstein, Marie Curie, Max Planck and other intellectuals for a major physics conference. FEANI is today by far the largest European federation of professional engineers and has established strong links with European institutions, industry and the academic world. FEANI as a forum of European engineers, is conscious of their diversity, but at the same time eager to speak

with one voice. The FEANI members are the national engineering bodies from 32 European countries which enables FEANI to speak on behalf of the entire European engineering profession : a quality officially recognized by the European Commission in a declaration dated 10 March 1994 recommending FEANI as an excellent example of self-regulation by a profession. FEANI achieved this through the provision of the EUR ING-title to engineers, one of the major achievements FEANI accomplished over its 60 years of history. FEANI also has consultative status with the United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization, UNESCO and is also a founding member of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO), whose Immediate Past President, Mrs Maria PIETRO-LAFFARGUE, also attended the dinner.

At the beginning of the 1960s, FEANI was convinced that the engineering profession in Europe could not be strengthened without mutual recognition of the professional qualifications provided by the numerous and diversified national systems of education and training. Thereafter, FEANI has constantly worked to set up structures to facilitate such



Hosts of the Evening : FEANI President Mr Lars BYTOFT and MEP Miss Emma McCLARKIN together with FEANI Secretary General Mr Dirk BOCHAR



Opening Speech by
MEP Miss Emma McClARKIN

recognition. The most recent event of that nature has certainly been the involvement in the European Commission's "Steering Group on the Professional Card" in the course of last year, under the auspices of Mr Jürgen TIEDJE, who also attended the dinner. Mr BYTOFT went on to say that FEANI had developed over the last years, the professional card for engineers and referred to the professional card being integrated in the refreshed Directive 2005/36 on the recognition of professional qualifications. FEANI members in Germany and the Netherlands have started issuing the EngineerING Card in line with the Directive's Legislative Proposal since a number of weeks. More countries will follow in the course of this year. FEANI therefore hopes that it could serve - and assist - the EU Commission when it looks for pilot-projects on the implementation, management, administration, etc. of such a Professional Card. Many societal subjects have been addressed by FEANI over the years: the environment, evolution of technologies, education and training, technology transfer, innovation, continued professional development, the status of engineers and technicians in Europe and worldwide, their mobility and the transparency in their qualifications. FEANI

has proven to be visibly active in all the matters of interest for the engineering community and will continue to do so.

About the role of engineers in society and in today's turbulent Europe, MEP Ms Emma McClARKIN then took the floor and stated that in the 21st century, the European economy is, quite literally, built on engineering. From aeronautics, through healthcare, communications and mining, engineers play a vital role in innovation, research and in enhancing Europe's global economic activity. She pointed out that, throughout the centuries, it has been the genius and originality of engineers that transformed our economies, our societies and our understanding of the world. Some of the greatest and most influential inventions in history have been thought of, tested and built in Europe. The steam locomotive, the jet engine, radar, penicillin, the electron microscope, the Millau Viaduct, the Channel Tunnel and, of course, the greatest scientific experiment of all time, the Large Hadron Collider - all of these engineering feats came from, or exist in, Europe - and all have had an enormous impact on the history of humankind. She went on to say that in recent years and in the coming decades, engineering in Europe will come under increasing pressure, as other countries

and economic zones continue to churn out more and more graduates and seek to enhance their roles in research and innovation, eventually being able to surpass the EU's Member States. That is why she believed *professional mobility* in Europe is so incredibly important. *"Not only can we seek to maintain our comparative advantage with emerging powers like China and India, we will improve the Single Market, develop more flexible labor markets and encourage the cross-border provision of services. Indeed, in 21st century Europe, providing services or gaining employment in another Member State is a clear demonstration of how EU citizens can play an active role in the Single Market."* According to MEP E. McClARKIN we should aim to encourage Member States to regulate professions in a more proportionate manner, with a view to reducing the total number of regulated professions in the EU, setting aside the healthcare sector, in order to assist professionals and to achieve the objectives of professional mobility. MEP E. McClARKIN had the privilege of issuing an Internal Market Committee report on modernizing the professional qualifications before the Commission's proposals were announced. She was very pleased to see that the Commission had taken on many of the views and



Opening Speech of the 60th FEANI Anniversary Event
by FEANI President, Mr Lars BYTOFT



More than 80 people from the European engineering society, academia, industry and politics attended the dinner from 22 different countries

suggestions made by the Parliament, and she thanked Mr Jürgen TIEDJE for his hard work and cooperation in this regard. She also referred to having had the pleasure of working with MEP Mrs B. VERGNAUD, who equally attended the dinner. MEP B. VERGNAUD will be rapporteur for the IMCO report on the Commission's proposals. MEP E. McCLARKIN then asked all attendees to raise their glasses and to join her in a toast for the New Year and for this special FEANI birthday.

Key-note address of the evening was given by MEP Mr Guy VERHOFSTADT, who changed the subject matter slightly. He referred to the 730 days it took the countries of the Euro zone to face the

most threatening financial crisis within living memory. The depth and size of the euro crisis are well known. Member States of the euro area piled up public debts above an acceptable 60% of their GNP for a staggering €2300 billion. Accumulated overall public debt of the five most concerned Member States within the euro zone – Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain – is worth €3100 billion, while most Member States tolerated annual fiscal deficits far below an acceptable -3% of their GNP. MEP G. VERHOFSTADT stated that if we wanted to save the euro - the most visible guarantee of financial stability within the euro zone - we all should return to financial and budgetary discipline. A common currency cannot stand unless

Member States holding their public debts below the 60% threshold and their fiscal deficits above the -3% of their GNP.

Speaking to engineers, he referred to the fiscal and economic federal union he had in mind. Since many years 'economic governance' is in the air. But even the sixpack

of legislative measures, adopted in September 2011, does not install 'economic governance' at the euro zone-level. An economic union wants the economies of the euro area to be replaced by one euro zone-economy. This target is far from being achieved. It implies a much more integrated and more active euro zone-economy, led by one euro zone-minister of Economics. An economic union is all about economic integration. If the euro is to survive and our economies are willing to restart, such an economic integration is an absolute necessity.

"Next to budgetary discipline and austerity-measures we urgently need a European action and investment plan which should focus on integrated European infrastructure networks in the areas of transport, energy, information & communication technologies, research and development. Networks, paving a European way towards non-fossil economies. Both paths – austerity measures and investments – do not contradict one another. It's up to the Member States to save their budgets and to master their debts. But it's up to the Union to act and to invest. Needless to



FEANI Sec Gen Dirk BOCHAR and MEP Guy VERHOFSTADT on Professional Mobility

say that the Union in this case must find more means than the poor 1% of the Union's GNP in the EU's treasury. In the USA about 30% of the country's GNP goes to the federal level. In the present circumstances supplementary means for the EU can not come from the Member States. Therefore we should go for other sources. For instance to be found by a European financial transaction tax, the euro-wide issuance of Eurobonds (mobilizing private savings) and financial means to be generated by the ECB."

MEP G. VERHOFSTADT went on to say that for an economic European restart *"we will need engineers, more than ever. Engineers in the literal sense of the word, not engineers of the mind. We need them for their skills, but even more for their sense of innovation and creativity. On a European scale we have them. Representing over 6 million professional engineers in about 32 European countries, FEANI is well placed to know it"*, G. VERHOFSTADT said. But the absence of more European integration and national imbalances still impede European mobility, particularly for highly skilled professions such as engineers. Notwithstanding the basic European freedoms, the free flow of people, goods, capital and services, *bureaucratic procedures concerning*

the mutual recognition of diploma's and certificates hinders the free flow of engineers. The free flow of engineers moving from countries with a surplus to countries with a shortage of engineers, even within the euro area, should be enabled and supported. MEP G.VERHOFSTADT fully supported FEANI's contribution and interests in the revision of Directive 2005/36 on the recognition of professional qualifications : the abolition of obstacles to the free movement of persons and services is one of the major objectives of the Union. He fully supported the key elements in the 2011-Proposal for amending the Directive of 2005, willing to simplify rules for the mobility of professionals within the Union. He welcomed, together with the attendees and participants, the introduction of a European professional card, better access to information on the recognition of professional qualifications, updating minimum training requirements for professionals and mutual evaluation of regulated professions.

Finally MEP G. VERHOFSTADT plead for more European integration : *"European unity has given us an unbroken period of 50 years of justice and peace, a free, fair and democratic subcontinent. Unprecedented economic growth had quadrupled many Member States' GNP*



MEP Bernadette VERGNAUD

over the last fifty years. More jobs than ever exist for both men and women. Open access to universities and high schools for the best and the brightest, whatever their parents' income or standing and a social security-regime second to none in the free world. Are we willing to lose all what European unity has fought for? A fully integrated European Union should stand for the largest and strongest economy on the earth : thanks to its engineers. Thanks to you : keep on moving!"

The evening was then closed by a final speech of MEP Malcolm HARBOUR - he himself an engineer - who briefly outlined the activities in the IMCO Committee of which he is the Chairman. Other MEPs present were MEP Mr A. FOX and MEP Mrs V. FORD. The FEANI Anniversary Celebration was attended by more than 80 people.



The Key-Note address was delivered by MEP Mr Guy VERHOFSTADT



The closing words by IMCO-Chairman, MEP Mr Malcolm HARBOUR



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