Validation of non formal and informal learning (VNFIL) in Europe

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Validation

A *process* of confirmation by an authorised body that an individual has acquired learning outcomes measured against a relevant standard.
Why Validation of non formal and informal learning?

Makes learning visible

Values the learning of individuals irrespective of the context in which it took place

Empowers the individual who is at the centre of the validation process
Validation: four phases

The four phases are mixed and balanced in different ways: reflecting the particular purpose of each validation arrangement.
European Guidelines 2009 → Reviewed in 2015

- Basic validation features
- Conditions for development and validation
- Contexts (ET, enterprises, skills audit and the LM, voluntary sector)
- Tools (extracting evidence or presenting evidence)
- **Key questions** relevant to developing and implementing VNFIL (Annex 1)
Developing and implementing Validation

- Clarify the purpose of validation
- Identify how validation responds to the needs of the individual
- Guidance and counselling is in place, targeted and coordinated
- Coordination of relevant stakeholders: avoid fragmentation and ensure a coherent approach
- Visibility and sustainability: linking validation to NQFs
Developing and implementing Validation (cont.)

- Strengthen validation outcomes: same or equivalent standards as those used in formal education
- Strengthen trust in and credibility of validation: link to QA arrangements
- Strengthen the professional competences of validation practitioners
- Systematically reflect on the role of validation in the different sectors
- Clarify the tools and instruments to be used
**Validation Inventory**

**Objectives**

1 – A trustworthy source of information

2 – Up to date information

3 - Systematic monitoring of progress

4 - Both a country-specific and a thematic dimension

5 – Work together with the **guidelines**
The European Inventory, 2016

- 36 country reports (covering 33 countries)
  - Sub-sector of education
  - Labour market
  - Third sector

- 4 Thematic studies
  1. Validation and OER
  2. Financing validation
  3. Validation in relation to the labor market: The cases of youth and health sector
  4. Monitoring validation

- A synthesis of main findings

www.cedefop.europa.eu/validation/inventory
Validation Arrangements

Number of countries with validation arrangements in place by broad sector:

- Education Sector: 35
- Labour Market: 15
- Third Sector: 22
# Validation Europe

**Overview of validation arrangements in Europe**

- Number of countries meeting the validation principles in at least one sector of education
- Has the principle in at least 4-5 sectors of education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Practitioners</th>
<th>Target Disadvantage Groups</th>
<th>Transparent Quality Assurance</th>
<th>Skills Audits</th>
<th>Synergies with Credits</th>
<th>Links to NQF</th>
<th>Compliance with Standards</th>
<th>Information available</th>
<th>Counselling available</th>
<th>Validation Arrangements in place</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Transparent quality assurance</td>
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<td>Guidance and counselling accessible</td>
<td>Validation arrangements in place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: European Inventory 2016
VNFIL users: disadvantaged groups

14 countries (BE-FR, CZ, FI, FR, DE, IS, LV, MT, NL, PL, RO, ES, CH, TK)

In FI and CZ however main users are the **unemployed** or those at **risk** of unemployment
2.3 What can be achieved through validation in formal education?
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- **Exemptions**: 25 countries
- **Access**: 17 countries
- **Certificates Not linked to formal educ**: 14 countries
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Training specifications

- Adult Education
- CVET
- General Education
- Higher Education
- IVET

Map of Europe showing the validation specifications across different countries.
2.3 What can be achieved through validation?
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[Map of Europe with different shades indicating various education levels: Training specifications, Adult Education, CVET, General Education, Higher Education, IVET]
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Training specifications

- Adult Education
- CVET
- General Education
- Higher Education
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2.3 What can be achieved through validation?
Outcomes of Validation: some examples

A formal qualification (CH, IVET, process of four phases)

A certificate (not a formal qualification) – but may give access to formal education (BE-NL validation leads to a ‘Certificate of Work Experience’ (‘Ervaringsbewijs’) if through validation individuals demonstrate they have acquired the skills needed to perform an occupation - not a diploma. (Similar certificates exist in ES, CZ, NL)

Validation (skills identification/documentation) is followed by tailored learning/training leading to a certificate or qualification (IS skills identification is followed by tailored training leading to a certificate - not a qualification - that gives access to formal education - also focus on low qualified adults - employed/unemployed)

Outcome oriented or a pathway? Little known on validation of basic skills (mostly for obtaining a qualification, certificate for a specific job or occupation or accessing formal education)

Valuing learning and empowerment, but also (formal) visibility of learning (formal qualification)
The future

1. Coordination, targeting and flexibility
   How can we ensure a coherent experience for the individual across sectors?

2. Information, guidance and counseling
   How it can be integrated in career guidance?

3. Standards, learning outcomes and link to NQFs
   Is it possible to find common standards described in learning outcomes?
   Can we ensure VNFIL is not a dead-end process?

4. Real implementation
   Are the institutional settings, resources and methodologies in place?
Thank you!

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#ValidationEurope

http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/validation