Competences Before Diplomas

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Project Result 1

COMPARATIVE RESEARCH

OF THE STATE-OF-THE-ART IN VALIDATION OF

NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

ANNEX

1

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project acronym:

CompB4D

Project title:

Competences Before Diplomas

Project Number:

Project N°: 2021-1-FR01-KA220-ADU-00030141

Sub-programme or KA:

KA220-YOU - Cooperation partnerships in youth

KA2: YOUTH: Increasing quality, innovation and recognition of youth work

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CONSORTIUM

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1.   Introduction

As part of the project "Competences Before Diplomas", Erasmus+ KA2 funded by European Commission under project no. 2021-1-FR01-KA220-ADU-00030141 which aims to identify and develop possible ways of recognition and validation of competences acquired by non-formal and informal settings, especially with left behind adult learners and other disadvantaged target groups; a cross-country comparison was made to identify and assess the different institutions, organisations, measures and arrangements in each of the countries studied : France, Cyprus, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Romania and Slovakia.

In this annex, a table is provided outlining the different arrangements and rules in place for the validation of prior learning in each country. This table has been compiled according to the information collected and published by the European Center for the Development of Vocational Training.

This annex follows the fifth point of the document entitled "*CompB4D_PR1-Analysis of European and National Scenario FIRST PART*" : 5. Best Practices. This annex is to be read in conjunction with it.

2. Comparison of national information about the validation of prior learning - CEDEFOP

FRANCE	CYPRUS	IRELAND	ITALY	PORTUGAL	ROMANIA	SLOVAKIA
Since the social modernisation act of 17th January 2002, validation of non-formal and informal learning (*Validation des acquis de l'expérience*) (VAE) has offered a third route to qualifications and vocational certificates, alongside initial education and training and lifelong learning. In order to obtain accreditation, the applicant (self-employed, employees or volunteers) must submit a dossier and potentially undergo an interview with the jury for the relevant qualification, which then decides whether to award the chosen qualification fully or partially. The interview is used to	In 2013, the education ministry set up an interdepartmental committee with the task to develop and monitor the implementation of a comprehensive action plan for the validation of non-formal and informal learning, in line with the Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning (2012/C 398/01). The action plan was successfully developed. The council of ministers on 18 May 2017 ([35]) approved the establishment of the national	Under an EU Council recommendation ([30]), Member States should have arrangements in place for the validation of non-formal and informal learning no later than 2018. Under the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, Quality and Qualifications Ireland is required to establish policies on recognition of prior learning within the policies and criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression	Italy's legislative framework for the recognition of prior learning was put into place with the Legislative Decree 13/2013 which established the national system of certification of competences and the inter-ministerial decree of June 2015 which defined the operational framework for the recognition of regional qualification at the national level. The Italian regions are the main hub for services for labour and vocational training on the territory and therefore, within the system supporting active labour or vocational training policies, are tackling the issue of the certification and validation of	Recognition of prior learning (recognition, validation and certification of competences process - RVCC) comprises the identification of formal, non-formal and informal competences developed throughout life; through the development of specific activities and the application of a set of appropriate evaluation tools. Adults may start this process at any time at a Qualifica centre ([58]). RVCC process has two distinct paths: the education and the professional. To access educational or professional RVCC processes, candidates must be at least 18 years old and possess sufficient knowledge in relation to the key competence and the professional	Validation of prior learning is done through assessment centres. The centres are local private or public bodies authorised to conduct validation procedures, for one or more occupations, developed at national level. Since 2000, legislation on the national system for validation of non-formal and informal learning has been gradually developed and put in place ([59]). The National Authority for Qualifications, through the newly established National Centre for Accreditation, ([60]) coordinates and monitors the validation process. The centre is a specialised structure within the authority responsible for :	There is no genuine and appropriately developed national model for validation of non-formal and informal learning. The Lifelong Learning Act (568/2009) created some preconditions for gradual progress but it in fact refers only to certification of the ability to run a business originally restricted to certificate of apprenticeship holders. The following are data indicating the trend in issuing certificates 'verifying professional competences', entitling people without a certificate of apprenticeship (required by the Trade Licensing Act) to start a business.

complete and clarify the information contained in the application dossier. It allows the jury to check the authenticity of the file, to check the level of proficiency of all the skills required to obtain the (partial) qualification and to discuss the experience and practice acquired in respect of the activities or functions that the applicant has exercised or held.

Through VAE, anybody can obtain a full qualification or certificate based on his or her professional experience ([102]).

All vocational qualifications registered in the national register of vocational qualifications (RNCP) can also be accessed via validation of non-formal and informal learning. This includes all formal qualifications issued by the State and those recognised by

qualifications authority, with the powers to further enhance the quality assurance systems in education and training, to monitor and integrate the scheme for the validation of non-formal and informal learning in the Cyprus qualifications framework after its completion, to monitor the Cyprus qualifications framework/European qualifications framework levels on the certificates, diplomas and Europass documents, to further strengthen the legal aspect of the Cyprus qualifications framework and to develop a registry for the Cyprus qualifications framework.

The education

(ATP).

While the legal basis for the development of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policies was established in the Qualifications Act 1999, the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) published principles and operational guidelines in 2005 ([31]). Recognition of prior learning policy is currently being revised by Quality and Qualifications Ireland. Quality and Qualifications Ireland has consulted widely with relevant stakeholders to achieve a more cohesive approach to delivering recognition of prior learning nationally.

competences, contextualising and differentiating tools and approaches.

However, different phases of advancement of regional policies and practices on this theme can still be seen, highlighting that now more than ever it is necessary to maintain national legislation and a framework of rules to protect the reliability of procedures and therefore equal opportunities for final beneficiaries. More specifically, the legislative framework, fully outlined in 2015, is a step on a path towards the coordination of regional rules and services for validating and certifying competences.

In some cases, these have already been implemented and have been accessible for years to more or less broad categories of

competence framework. 23-years old or younger candidates must also submit proof of a minimum of three years professional experience via a statement issued by the relevant social security office.

One of the tools used in the RVCC process to evaluate the candidates is the reflective learning portfolio (portefólio reflexivo). It is a written record of the candidate's competences acquired throughout life; it also presents a critical appraisal of their knowledge, competence development, prior experience, and education. It includes all relevant supporting documentation linked to the different areas of the portfolio. Validation of these competences is done under the referential framework of key competences elaborated by ANQEP ([59]).

A jury appointed by a Qualifica Centre does

authorisation of the assessment centres and staff involved in validating non-formal and informal learning of adults;

Coordination of assessment centre activities;

quality assurance;

managing the national register of the authorised centres and national register of evaluators (evaluators of competences, evaluators of evaluators of competences, external evaluators).

The validation procedures consist of well-defined national standards, criteria and guidelines. The assessment centres develop their own assessment instruments, based on national occupational standards and/or training standards, to evaluate the candidates. They are responsible for

Certificates verifying 'professional competence' are not equivalent to those from formal education. They substitute a 'certificate of apprenticeship' for the purpose of starting a business only. These certificate holders are entitled to start a craft regulated by the Trade Licensing Act (455/1991), but they are not allowed to progress within formal education based on these certificates, as they do not certify the respective education level. [1]

the social partners. Since 2016, three IVET qualifications are accessible in adult education for certification through VAE ([**103**]), and can possibly be partly validated in skills set (*blocs de compétences*). Offering more IVET qualifications in a modular form depends on (high) demand for such qualifications in adult education. An online database for referencing qualifications in skill blocks is in place ([**104**]). For more information about arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning please visit Cedefop's European database ([**105**]).	ministry coordinates the implementation of the project 'Establishing a mechanism for the validation of non-formal and informal learning'. The project is co-funded by the European social fund and the Republic of Cyprus. This project has supported a mapping study of the current situation in Cyprus regarding the validation of non-formal and informal learning. Based on the results of the study, an overall national action plane for the establishment of mechanisms for the validation of non-formal and informal learning in Cyprus was developed in early 2018. This was put into public consultation in May 2018. In October 2018, the council of	Quality and Qualifications Ireland aims to develop comprehensive policy and operational procedures in line with legislation on the basis of national collaboration, consideration of the current arrangements and identification of best practice nationally and internationally. For more information about arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning please visit Cedefop's European database ([32]).	beneficiaries: in this regard, we should mention the systems already activated in the regions of Emilia-Romagna, Piedmont, Tuscany, Lombardy, Umbria, Aosta Valley and Veneto. Meanwhile, some regions have implemented the indications of the 2015 decree and in 2016 adopted provisions to regulate validation and certification services. These include Abruzzo Basilicata, the autonomous Province of Bolzano, Campania, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Lazio, Liguria, Apulia, Sardinia and the autonomous province of Trento. The remaining regions – Abruzzo, Calabria, Marche, Molise and Sicily – are still in the standardisation phase. The 30 June 2015 decree also included measures relating to the functions required for providing	the certification of competences after the evaluation of the candidate. It can include written, oral or practical evaluation, or a combination of the three, that can be organised by key competences areas in the case of the education path, or by professional competences in the case of the professional path. Candidates can obtain a full certification (when they have proven that they possess all the competence units of the standard) or a partial certification. In the education path, a full certification enables the candidate to obtain a certificate of basic education (4, 6 or 9 years of schooling) or upper-secondary education (12 years of schooling) corresponding to EQF levels 1 to 4. In the professional path, a full certification testifies that the candidate holds the competences of specific professional standard at EQF level 2 and 4. Partial certifications allow	providing validation services following specific requests by beneficiaries/candidates who can acquire full or partial qualifications at EQF levels 1, 2 and 3. Certificates of competences are nationally and internationally recognised. As part of the validation process, the centres offer information and counselling to the candidates. Currently, there are 37 fully functioning local assessment centres that can validate prior learning of candidates, mainly in services, construction and agriculture. For more information about arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning please visit Cedefop's European database ([61]).	

ministers, with Decision No 85.959, dated 16 October 2018, approved the national action plan, which foresees setting up a validation mechanism and its pilot implementation. The first results from the pilot operation of the mechanism in the fields of adult education, youth and volunteering are estimated to be available at the end of 2019. In the system of vocational qualifications a validation procedure consisted of four phaseshas been developed. The procedure is aligned with the European Recommendation on Validation of non-formal and informal learning ([36]). The four phases are : Identification : at this stage the learning		validation and certification services. More precisely: accompanying and supporting identification of the competences and making them transparent; planning and implementation of assessment activities; implementation of assessment activities on aspects relating to curricula and professional contents. The decree describes the tasks and activities that personnel responsible for providing services for the identification, validation and certification of competences should exercise in the various phases of the process, in other words, access to the service/welcoming, recognition/identification, assessment and certification;	the candidate to attend the remaining training to obtain a qualification. These processes are under the responsibility of the Qualifica Centres, managed by ANQEP. Currently there are around 290 centres spread all over the country. Participation in RVCC processes in 2017 was 11.1% when compared with all adults enrolled in VET offers. For more information about arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning please visit Cedefop's European database ([60]).		

outcomes gained through formal, non-formal and informal learning are determined. The identification takes place in approved by Human Resource Development Authority centres for assessment of vocational qualifications. As first step information on the system of vocational qualifications is provided to the candidate and through an interview they are advised to choose a specific qualification standard, relevant to their set of knowledge, skills, competence. The results of this phase are described in the identification and documentation report ; Documentation : This phase entails sufficient proof of the previously identified knowledge, skills, competence. The results are		the European qualifications framework level for each function is also indicated. We should point out that, in their position as awarding bodies, the regions offer a direct guarantee on the criteria and methods adopted for recruitment of personnel entrusted with providing such functions and verification of their professional requisites, in compliance with the principles of collegiality, neutrality, impartiality and independence. In those regions where the regional rules and services system is already accessible, provider competence training has already been planned and implemented, whereas where work is still ongoing to make services operational, the debate on professional resources is part of a more general framework			

| | recorded in the identification and documentation report. If the candidates decide to proceed with the assessment in order to acquire the certificate of the vocational qualification they have to fill and sign an application form. When a group of three candidates is formed the director/manager of the centre for assessment of vocational qualifications submits the application forms and all paperwork to the Human Resource Development Authority for approval;assessm ent: if the Human Resource Development Authority approves the applications which are examined against the criteria of the system of vocational qualifications the candidates may proceed with assessment. This | | regarding system standards.

To help develop and raise awareness of the theme, the national institute for public policy analysis has prepared a multimedia training package, which has been designed in an open-source environment (Moodle) and provided on a MOOC (Massive Online Open Courses) platform, to transfer all the information, know-how, methodologies and tools useful for managing the various phases of the process to service providers. For more information about arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning please visit Cedefop's European database ([38]). | | | |
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	is carried out by two approved assessors in 2 to 5 meetings and is based on the relevant vocational qualification standard. The results are depicted in the assessment report. The assessors are trained by Human Resource Development Authority; Certification. The assessment reports are submitted to Human Resource Development Authority, the results are validated, and full or partial certification is given. For more information about arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning please visit Cedefop's European database ([37])				

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